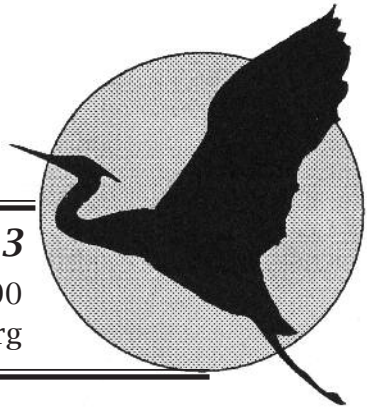


Voice of the Haw



The Haw River Assembly *December 2013*



P.O. Box 187 · Bynum, NC 27228 · (919) 542-5790

email: info@hawriver.org · www.hawriver.org

1,000 Happy Kids on the Haw River!

*"Thank you for teaching us about pollution and for taking us to the river. I loved wading in the river. It is so beautiful." *** "I have never been somewhere so cool like that before. Thank you so much." *** "Thank you for showing us the animals. I liked the hike and animal skins. I want to go to the Haw River again." *** "Thank you for taking us on the*



*scavenger hunt and teaching us about aphids. Also, thanks for teaching us that everything in the forest has a purpose." *** "I enjoyed seeing all the wildlife and feeling what Native Americans might have felt when they inhabited the Haw River." *** "I really enjoyed the river watch program. I learned so much about macroinvertebrates. It was really cool!"*

These happy comments come from students who attended this year's hugely successful 24th Annual Learning Celebration (LC). We had over 1,000 students and teachers from four different watershed counties participating, as well as over 100 volunteers and contributors who made this program possible.

Look no further than to the many excited faces of fourth-graders to see the

tangible impact of kids connecting with nature. A very special thank you to our incredible Steering Committee and Crew Volunteers for dedicating their time and effort to help protect the Haw River and its vitality. The love and commitment they put into this endeavor are essential in making it "The Best Field Trip Ever!"

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NC's Water Quality Standards Are Sub-standard

A long overdue public hearing for the Triennial Review of water quality standards for North Carolina was held in Raleigh on November 18. The Haw Riverkeeper joined citizens and activists from across the state to urge changes that would put our standards in line with current EPA recommendations, better protect public health and aquatic ecosystems, and meet the clear mission of the Clean Water Act to get pollution out of our waters. Standards for heavy metals, nutrients, turbidity, in-stream flow requirements, and a host of chemicals that pollute our waters were all targeted as inadequate.

North Carolina is lacking water quality standards for 86 of the 151 water quality criteria that EPA recommends for drinking water supplies. How can the people of our state have confidence in the most basic of human needs – drinking water – if we are not even monitoring for these pollutants the EPA considers critical? And what about the unmonitored hundreds of emerging contaminants and industrial sources of chemicals

that find their way into our surface waters and public water supplies through wastewater effluent, runoff from sludge fields, and leachate from landfills? We continue to treat our public waterways as pollution conveyance systems, and are paying the price by endangering public health.

NC has blown past the June 2013 EPA deadline to replace the chlorophyll-a criteria currently being used to measure nutrient pollution in this state, with numeric criteria for nitrogen and phosphorus. Doing so will give us a much better understanding of the actual nutrient pollution in impaired waters such as Jordan Lake. We need to regulate the sources, instead of measuring the excess algae that feeds on these nutrients. Nutrient criteria will help us negate criticism from those who point to the current chlorophyll-a data as inadequate – using that as an excuse to not take the actions needed to reduce pollution in major drinking water reservoirs like Jordan Lake.

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Photo by Tracy DeVoe

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Tracy DeVoe, *Watershed Education Coordinator*
Kathy Buck, *Office Manager*

To join The Haw River Assembly

or renew your membership, send a check to:

HRA, P.O. Box 187, Bynum, NC 27228.

Individual: \$25 Family: \$40

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

Photo by Cynthia Crossen



Notes from the Haw

Autumn is always a beautiful time on the Haw, and this year's colors have lingered with a last bright glow from the oaks, which always end the season. Along Dry Creek, near where I live, a family of otters has been fishing and playing, and some days I've been lucky enough to see several pairs of wood ducks with their amazing plumage. We are so fortunate to have beautiful streams and wildlife in our watershed, despite the many threats they face. Seeing such beauty and wildness renews my efforts to keep battling the forces that threaten to de-forest, pave over, frack and pollute what we have left.

It is with much gratitude that we say farewell to some retiring board members. Stepping down after giving us many years of their time, talent, and knowledge are Jonathan Davis, Bob Brueckner, Rich Goldberg, Angela Moore, Mimi Pollard, and Cecelia Vassar. Many thanks to all of them for their time given for Board leadership and guidance for our work, and for volunteering on committees and at our events. We especially wish to acknowledge the tremendous work Bob Brueckner has done as part of our Land Conservation Committee – giving countless hours of time to protect lands along the river as part of state and local parks or land trusts. He has been instrumental in our work, and we look forward to continuing these efforts. We welcome our newly elected Board members John Wagner and Jo Sanders, both long time volunteers and activists with HRA who live in Chatham County. Thanks for joining us!

From the river, Elaine Chiosso, HAW RIVERKEEPER®

HRA Annual Meeting at Town of Haw River

November 2 was a gorgeous day for a picnic at Red Slide Park in the Town of Haw River. In this new park amid old textile mills and the remnants of the dams that powered them, we shared songs, stories, and some stream monitoring. Then we joined other attendees at the Haw River History Museum, which is chock full of fascinating objects and photos of a bygone era. Gail Knauff, local historian and one of the museum's founders, gave a very interesting talk on the history of the area.



Photo by Susanne Gonski

Photos by Elaine Chiosso



HAW RIVERKEEPER®

Issues in the Watershed

from Elaine Chiosso, HAW RIVERKEEPER®

continued from page 1 The delay of the Triennial Review is part of a larger problem in our state, where we are rapidly losing ground on all fronts to protect our people and waters from pollution. Budget cuts to reduce staff in DENR, and confusing re-organization or elimination of divisions, mean that the public cannot count on state government to protect us from pollution and polluters. Once known as a leader in environmental protection in our southeast region, we are now in a race to the bottom, which will not only affect our health and environment, but ultimately our economy too. Dirty water is not a great selling point for clean industries.

We need stronger and more comprehensive water quality standards in North Carolina, and the ability to monitor and enforce them in a way that gives the public confidence that “business first” does not mean pollution first. If North Carolina does not have the will to carry out the Clean Water Act, we urge the EPA to step in and do it for us.

The public comment period on the Triennial Review of Surface Water Quality Standards is open until Jan. 3, 2014, at 5:00 pm. Direct your comments to Connie Brower, DENR/Division of Water Resources/Water Planning Section, Connie.Brower@ncdenr.gov. HRA will post its comments on our website by December 15.

“Pittsboro Matters” Organizes to RE-THINK Chatham Park

Concerned citizens, including the Haw River Assembly, have formed a group called “Pittsboro Matters” to urge the Town Board to slow the approval process down and re-think the rezoning of 7,120 acres for Chatham Park for a “Planned Development District.” The Master Plan proposed by the developers from Cary would create a city of 55,000 people – larger than Chapel Hill. HRA has tremendous concerns about how the wastewater, stormwater and need for drinking water would imperil both the Haw River and Jordan Lake. As proposed, this development would pave over over forests and wildlife habitat in an area currently mostly zoned for very low density rural and agricultural use. This land is the Triangle’s last remaining un-fragmented natural area, and the plan calls for very little conservation to ensure that any would remain. Chatham Park would nearly double the population of Chatham County. Traffic, trash, water, and air pollution would be a problem not only for Chatham County but for the region as a whole. This forested land and its buffered streams will be even more important as climate change impacts are felt.

In a very short time Pittsboro Matters has created outreach materials to alert the public, gathered petition signatures, and held a public “Citizen Forum” on Chatham Park on October 29 to an overflow crowd. Taskforces are working on various issues such as water, traffic, wildlife, the local economy and more, gathering information for recommendations to the town.

The recent elections saw the defeat of candidates who were in favor of fast tracking the zoning and development of Chatham Park, which cannot be built as proposed without this very drastic re-zoning approval. A last ditch attempt by outgoing Mayor Voller to get re-zoning of Chatham Park approved (at a 5½ hour standing room only meeting) on November 25 was tabled by the Board. They voted instead to begin a process to bring in consultants to review the Master Plan before any action is taken. We will work with the new Mayor, Bill Terry, and the Town Board to continue to develop a vision to make this project best for our waters, environment and people – because Pittsboro Matters!

The next meeting of Pittsboro Matters will be a Citizen Workshop to further explore the issues with maps and other resources, on December 12, 7 pm at the Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro. To learn more about all the issues, sign the petition, and join with Pittsboro Matters, visit the website at www.pittsboromatters.org.



Call or email the HRA office if you would like this yard sign to display.

News from the Fracking Frontlines

There was a great turnout at the Carolina Theater in Durham on Oct. 7 for the presentation by director Josh Fox of *GASLAND 2*. This excellent sequel about the impacts of fracking all over America (and globally) is still showing on HBO and is expected to be available on DVD this winter. There are some opportunities for public screenings in NC – if you have a group that is interested, please contact us.

All eyes are now on the Mining and Energy Commission (MEC) as it works on draft regulations about fracking that will *not* make this practice safer in NC than other states, as the General Assembly wanted us to believe. On every issue being discussed by the MEC, arguments are being made for the *least* restrictive and protective rules: forced pooling, underground injection of frack wastewater, baseline water testing, safe buffer distances from residences and schools, full disclosure of chemicals used in fracking, and on and on. Proposals to have better and safer regulations than those in states being devastated *continued on page 7*

Watershed Education News:

Teaching About the River

from Tracy DeVoe,
Watershed Education
Coordinator



Photo by Cynthia Crossen

continued from page 1 More reflections from student attendees reinforce our conviction that the LC is one of HRA's most worthwhile projects: "I loved the puppet show story. It started off with a kid in a school bus never paying attention to his surroundings and evolved into a complete summary of the Haw River area starting when the Native Americans decided to settle down next to it." *** "At the Haw River Learning Celebration, something I really found interesting was the amazing focus I saw in our group. I was surprised at our ability to be silent and observe well. It was so wonderfully peaceful to watch how we could connect so beautifully with nature in such a mature way. I'm grateful we had this opportunity to see how when we focus, we observe far better."

Next year will be the 25th Anniversary for the Learning Celebration. It warms our hearts to know we have so many good friends and kindred spirits who commit each and every LC season. Cheers to this wonderful community that demonstrates dedication daily with integrity and love for your environment and the Haw River. We celebrate you! For more information on how to take part in next year's 25th Anniversary Learning Celebration, please visit www.hawriver.org or call at (919) 542-5790.

Thank You To Everyone Who Made the LC Possible --
We couldn't do it without you!

Steering Committee members, thank you for going beyond the call of duty in the months leading up to, during, and after the LC: Elaine Chiosso, Cynthia Crossen, Jamie Saunders, Maja Kricker, Wanda Sundermann, Martha Pentecost, Candor Plaza, Rob and Molly Dubose, and Catherine Deininger who met monthly to plan, promote and implement various LC tasks.

Volunteers who helped helped with site moves, set up the program sites, and taught the students – thank you! We are so grateful for returning volunteers, as well as this year's new volunteers. Thanks to Chris Carter, Maja Kricker, and Cynthia Crossen for serving as crew all three weeks. Thanks to Wanda Sundermann and Mark Marcoplos for hosting our annual Work Party and Thank You Party at their beautiful home, and to Libby Searles-Bohs for creating gorgeous handmade frames for our Thank You gifts to all the volunteers. Thanks to Clyde Jones for mowing in Bynum, as well as for our beautiful LC T-Shirt art.

Special thanks to: HRA Board of Directors; and HRA Staff: Elaine Chiosso, HRA Executive Director, who always promotes, supports, and preserves the meaningful legacy of the Learning Celebration; Cynthia Crossen for her dedication to the recruitment of volunteers, as well as



Fourth-graders discover the wonders of the river in Bynum. Photo by Cynthia Crossen

for her incredible help with running the "Game Show"; Paul Fleckenstein, Safety and Logistics Coordinator, for his knowledge and expertise of LC logistics; and Kathy Buck for her administrative support throughout the program.

We would like to say a special thank you to **land owners and site providers** for providing us with forests for the students to learn and play in, as well as river access. Thanks to NC State Parks for use of the Lower Haw River State Natural Area in Bynum. Thanks to Saxapahaw landowners Lea Clayton, Donovan Zimmerman, Elizabeth England, Yolanda Lujan, Jim and Diane Burke, and James and Janet MacFall. Thanks to Haw River Ballroom for offering an alternate program site in case of inclement weather. Thanks to Camp Guilrock, and to Mark Christie for his support there.



Wayne Poole uses a skull to teach kids about animals and the adaptations they have developed to help them survive. Photo by Zella Magoo

For **logistics support**, many thanks to Chris Carter for sharing the incredible solar cart that gave us power, as well as for designing and building the new drying rack for the LC camp. Thanks to Kevin Meehan for our Use-Yer-Foot camp “sinks”.

Thanks to the many wonderful **meal providers** who fed us so deliciously, with lovingly prepared vegetarian meals and care given to those with special dietary needs. A special thanks to Rachel Winters for coordinating meal efforts to provide us with amazing food for three weeks. Other greatly appreciated contributions came from the Saxapahaw General Store, the Eddy, Whole Foods, Trader Joes, Harris Teeter, Fresh Market, Lowe’s Food, CVS Pharmacy, Maple View Farms, and Starbucks.



Excellent teen volunteer teachers like Chloe Noblitt enliven the program and are vital to its success. Photo by Ken Crossen.

A Special Shout-Out to:
STARworks Ceramics for donating and providing wild, native Piedmont clay *** Shakori Hills for donating tents, including setup help, for potential rainy days in Bynum *** Paperhand Puppet Intervention for lending us beautiful amazing puppets *** Joe Jacob for donating guided paddling trips for our volunteers’ free time enrichment and connection with the river.

In Memoriam, Rob DuBose

We are dedicating this year’s Learning Celebration in memory of Rob DuBose, who died after a tragic road accident in September. Rob volunteered at the first Learning Celebrations (the Festival!) in the early 1990’s. He rejoined us in the past few years, along with his daughter Molly, as both a volunteer and a member of the Steering Committee for the project. He will be remembered as a wonderful and dedicated volunteer, and for his humor and wisdom in our community.



Our love and sympathy are with his wife Eliza and daughter Molly at this sad time.

*Rob, we’ll see you in the forest sunlight
through the leaves, and shadows cast;
We’ll see you in the river, in quiet pools
and rapids running fast;
Your spirit is with us,
Your memory will last.*

HRA Summer Camp Series

The Haw River Assembly will be partnering again this year with Haw River Canoe and Kayak (HRCK) for an incredible two weeks of adventure, exploration, and river fun for youth ages 8 to 12 years old! Each week will be full of discovery that will enable campers to connect with the Haw River, explore nature, and develop a sense of stewardship through engaging adventures. Campers will investigate water quality through a variety of basic stream monitoring techniques, take part in discussions about current issues facing the Haw River, and learn about what can be done to improve the health of our streams.

There will be guided explorations of the river’s many wonders by paddling on the river by kayak and canoe, as well as by hiking local trails along the banks, identifying plants and wildlife along the way. On paddling trips with professional instruction, campers will learn the basic fundamentals of flat-water and whitewater paddling. In addition to all the exciting daily activities, HRA Camps are adding a Thursday overnight camping experience for each week. Campers will enjoy star gazing, night paddling, storytelling, listening to wildlife, and feasting on a delicious campfire dinner.

Sign up now! Our dates are set for June 16 - June 20; and July 14 - July 18.

Tracy DeVoe, HRA’s Watershed Education Coordinator (previously a six year ACA whitewater kayak instructor, Director at Umstead State Park for Raleigh’s Parks and Recreation Nature Camps, and core staff at HRCK), will be partnering with Jake Matheny, a long time instructor/guide for Haw River Canoe and Kayak, and whitewater enthusiast. We are going to have an incredible two weeks and can’t wait to see you there! The fee is \$350 per week per child (age requirement is 8 to 12 years old).

Enrollment in this camp is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information or to sign up, contact HRCK at 336-260-6465 or info@hawrivercanoe.com – and please let them know you heard about this opportunity from us!





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

Every fall I am amazed anew at the community that comes together at the river for the Haw River Learning Celebration (LC). The Stream Watch Station, part of the LC's "core curriculum", in particular takes a lot of energy and dedication. Each morning after a quick breakfast, volunteers go down to the river to hunt for macroinvertebrates under river rocks at Bynum and Saxapahaw, and buried in the silty bottom sand upriver at Camp Guilrock. We sort what we find into bins that the 4th-graders can look in to see and identify life from the river. I am blessed to have two excellent stream watch teachers working with me: Cecelia Carver and Maja Kricker, as well as dedicated "critter catchers" each week.



Photo by Ken Crossen



Photo by Ken Crossen

Leading 4th-graders in river observation on the upper Haw at Camp Guilrock, I teach them to enhance their hearing with "deer ears".

Camp Guilrock, we can talk about how migratory birds depend on these resting places. Over the three weeks of the Learning Celebration, students count macroinvertebrate indicator species, measure water transparency, test pH, and make observations about the river. The Haw River Watch Project adds this data to our large and growing database of citizen monitoring results since 1994 – almost 20 years worth of information about the river! Thanks to our dedicated river watchers, and LC participants, we have a wealth of information we can use to protect the Haw River waterways.



"Critter Catchers" Maja Kricker, Maja Rose, and Cosmo Magoo get out on the river first thing in the morning in Saxapahaw, to find macroinvertebrates to show to the 4th-graders at the Learning Celebration. Photo by Cynthia Crossen

Our Stream Watch stations are set up right down by the river, so that kids can observe the river up close during a minute of silent observation, after which they can share their experiences. We can use every thing they notice to teach them about the river. For example, when they see a heron flying over the river in Bynum, we can talk about how a heron spears fish from the river for its food, and how pollution in the river might affect the heron's survival. Deer tracks give us an opportunity to talk about how animals depend on the river for clean water, and how pollution affects their health. When they observe a cloud of midges above the river in Saxapahaw, we can talk about how insect larvae hatch out of the river, and how they are food for fish and other insects. Empty clam shells at Saxapahaw bring up the question of who is eating those little clams, and the fact that animals like raccoons depend on the river for food and clean water. When we see the marshy wetlands at



Mary Lucas introduces kids to the citizen science of stream monitoring, with pH testing, at the Learning Celebration in Bynum. Photo by Cynthia Crossen

continued from page 3 by fracking are being rejected. These regulations will have to go through public hearings next year and we will be counting on people to come out in large numbers to **say no to fracking in NC.**

Haw River Assembly is part of FRACK FREE NC, the alliance of organizations in NC working on this issue. To sign the petition to ban fracking in NC and to stay up to date on the MEC, with the Fracking Update from Clean Water for North Carolina, go to FrackFreeNC.org. To see the Haw Riverkeeper's current slide show on fracking, go to our website, www.hawriver.org, and contact us if you would like the Haw Riverkeeper to give a presentation to your community or organization.

More Bad News for Jordan Lake

As if the bills passed to delay the Jordan Lake rules weren't bad enough, a legislative commission heavily weighted in favor of those who would like to see the rules weakened or even repealed, has been appointed. Senator Rick Gunn from Burlington will chair the committee, which is dominated by Republicans from the Triad who voted to support Gunn's bill to delay rules this past summer. They successfully got a bill passed to delay parts of the rules to try out a technology (never used before on a reservoir of this size) – solar powered water circulator devices to try to inhibit algae growth. This is a stunningly bad use of taxpayer money, and is made worse by the fact that only one company makes a product that fits the specs in the budget bill passed. The rules to protect Jordan Lake were passed in 2009 after 7 years of intensive work by all stakeholders, including impacted municipalities. The new committee is charged with reopening the whole issue and recommending a new clean-up strategy, one presumably less burdensome to upstream polluters. The current Jordan Lake rules fulfill a federal mandate under the Clean Water Act to reduce pollution levels. We call on the EPA to step in and do what's right for Jordan Lake.

Help Us Clean Up the Banks of the Haw!

Join volunteers cleaning up trash from the banks of the Haw River, the creeks, and Jordan Lake on

Saturday March 15,

for the Haw River Assembly's 24th Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon. Teams will be getting out trash in the river that's harmful to water and wildlife – from Greensboro down to Jordan Lake – and along creeks in Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Pittsboro. Join a team or start your own – youth groups with adult supervision are welcome to join. We provide the bags and gloves, you provide the people power! Since 1991, 3887 volunteers have cleaned up 7286 bags of trash, 1435 tires, and many tons of car parts, appliances and other big junk from our waterways! For more information and to sign up, contact HRA at (919) 542-5790 or info@hawriver.org.



2014 HRA T-shirt - Clyde Jones "Fox"

*Nutmeg brown, soft 100% cotton
T-shirt from TS Designs in Burlington,
with non-toxic, environmentally
friendly Rehance dye process.
Good for you, good for the river!*

*Modeled by Elaine Chiosso, Clyde
Jones, and Tracy DeVoe. Photo by Jef.*

\$ 25 (adult) S, M, L, XL, XXL
\$ 25 (ladies style) S, M, L, XL
\$ 20 (youth) S, M, L

Available at Townsend Bertram Outfitters
in Carrboro, Saxapahaw General Store,
Chatham Marketplace in Pittsboro, & the
HRA office in Bynum (919-542-5790).

**Special Holiday Sale - Give a Gift for
the River! Come by the HRA Bynum
office, 199 Bynum Hill Road, Pittsboro
27312, Dec. 2 - 20, for your 2014 T-
shirts, and discounted T-shirts from
previous years. Open weekdays 9 am
to 5 pm (call first to make sure we are
in: 919-542-5790), and on Saturdays
Dec. 7 and Dec. 14 from 10 am to 3 pm.**



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**Give A Gift to Help
the River!**

Upcoming 2013-14 HRA Events

See www.hawriver.org for details & updates.

Dec. 2 - 20, HRA Holiday T-shirt Sale, at the HRA office in Bynum, See details in T-shirt ad on page 7. Call 919-542-5790 for more information.

Dec. 7-8, Haw River Watch Monitoring weekend. For info: riverwatch@hawriver.org.

Thurs. Dec. 12, 7 pm, Pittsboro Matters Citizen Workshop on Chatham Park, at the Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro.

Sat. March 15, Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon, our annual river cleanup. See description on page 7. Contact us at www.hawriver.org or 919-542-5790 for more information and to sign up to volunteer.

March 22-23, Haw River Watch Monitoring weekend. For info: riverwatch@hawriver.org.



Check HRA's website, www.hawriver.org, in January 2014 for information on hikes and other field trips.



Photo at right: HRA members enjoy the Haw River at HRA's Annual Meeting in Red Slide Park, Town of Haw River. Photo by Elaine Chiosso

Photo above: Lyndon Shannon helps Cynthia Crossen with stream monitoring at Red Slide Park. Photo by Tracy DeVoe