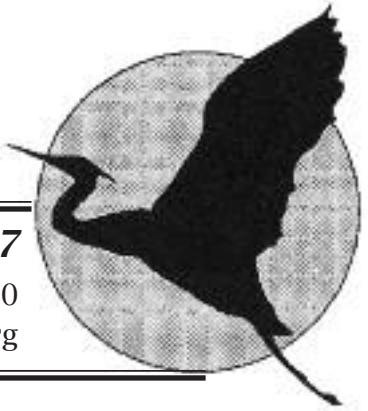


Voice of the Haw



The Haw River Assembly April 2017



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

Why So Much Trash in Our River?



Photo by Elaine Chiosso

This March was our 27th year of the Haw River Clean-Up-a-Thon with volunteers working from Greensboro down to Jordan Lake cleaning up the trash in our waterways. Since 1991, 4,800 volunteers, on foot and in boats, have pulled out 8,700 bags of trash, 1,700 tires, and tons of other junk from our waters. (Read all about this year's river clean-up on pages 4 and 5.)

Where does all this trash come from? Although some of it is litter left on stream banks and shorelines by fishers, picnickers and others, most of it is trash that flows downstream with stormwater. Trash in parking lots, yards, streets and roadsides ends up in storm drains and creeks, floating down the Haw River and finally to Jordan Lake. A huge percentage of what we pull out is plastics. Drinking water and soda bottles, pieces of styrofoam, plastic bags and all the toys, balls, buckets and other junk that end up in our

waters, plus a lot of beer cans. We especially hate to pick up empty engine oil or pesticide containers, knowing the toxic residue is now in the water. All of this trash is ugly to see in our waters, but it's life threatening for the fish, turtles and other life who live there.

We need to stop trashing our environment. We need to think twice about the throw-away culture we live in and the consequences it brings. We're proud of our efforts to make the river cleaner and are very grateful to our legion of volunteers, and our clean-up sponsors. But we need to tackle this at the front end, and talk about bottle returns, plastic bag bans, and other solutions, as well as raising greater awareness of this problem. Trash is the visible pollution we see in our waters. Like other pollutants, it should not be there.

Haw River Festival in Saxapahaw May 6th, 4 - 8 pm



Join us in our annual **HAW RIVER FESTIVAL** on the Haw River in Saxapahaw – Saturday May 6 from 4 to 8 pm! For directions and more info, visit www.HawRiver.org, or www.RiverMillVillage.com.

We'll have **live music** from * Village Band of Chapel Hill * Tim Smith Band * Counterclockwise String Band * Diali Cissokho
* stream monitoring * canoe rides for kids * info on watershed issues * T-shirts new & vintage * live music * local arts & crafts
* food trucks * farmers' market *

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Emily Sutton, *Haw River Watch Coordinator*
Kathy Buck, *Office Manager*
Cynthia Crossen, *Newsletter Editor*

Thanks to **Jan Burger** for art throughout this newsletter: HRF Heron, People's Climate Poster, Boy with Butterfly, River Watch Heron, and our Clean-up-a-thon logo.

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 non-profit 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



Notes from the Haw

Climate Change is here: What a strange turning of winter into spring we've just experienced here in the Piedmont. The second warmest February on record was followed by several deep freeze nights, and even a little snow, in March, and an unusual spring drought. Trees, flowers, birds, and people all seemed confused by the strange weather, and no amount of denial can keep us from recognizing that we are experiencing climate change. Our waterways showed impacts as well. Several of our stream monitoring teams spotted more algae than usual on the Haw River and creeks, including a massive Spirogyra green algae bloom on Dry Creek. This is a



Photo by Fred Tutman

very dangerous time for the United States to be eliminating programs and policies to reduce greenhouse gases. Instead, we need to be accelerating our efforts to replace the fossil fuel economy of mining, drilling, fracking, and pipeline building with clean, safe energy that stops contributing carbon and methane to our atmosphere.

On the Move: We expect HRA to be relocating our office this summer, but we're still working out the details. We'll keep you informed through our E-mail blasts (send us your email address to subscribe) and more news in our August newsletter!

We look forward to seeing you at our Haw River Festival on May 6th, as we open up the season for Saturdays in Saxapahaw. It's always fun, and a great time to be out on the river!

From the river, Elaine Chiosso, HAW RIVERKEEPER®

Thanks to all the restaurants, breweries, and coffee houses that hosted "meet and greet" events to celebrate our 35th Anniversary -- The Eddy Pub, Saxapahaw * Reeds Coffee and Art, Mebane * Bond Brothers Beer Company, Cary * Press Coffee and Crepes, Graham * The Crunkleton, Chapel Hill * Steel String Brewery, Carrboro * Hope Valley Brewing Company, Durham. And thanks for the donations to a silent auction and raffle at events by: Duke Lemur Center, Carrburritos, The Crunkleton, Carolina Brewery, Shakori Hills, 411 West, Morehead Planetarium, Learning Outside Meadow Lark festival, Durham Museum of Life and Science, and the Durham Bulls! We had a great time chatting with HRA members and meeting some new folks around the watershed!



HAW RIVERKEEPER®

Issues in the Watershed

from Elaine Chiosso, HAW RIVERKEEPER®

EPA and Clean Water Under Attack

Underlying all the work we do to protect the Haw River watershed are the laws of the United States that were created to regulate polluters, set standards for drinking water, and protect ecosystems. They were put in place to prevent stormwater, wastewater and industrial pollutants from degrading and destroying our rivers and lakes. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and laws like the Clean Water Act stop companies from dumping waste into waterways and endangering communities. Although polluters have fought hard to weaken and undermine these regulations, and many states fail at adequately enforcing them, they are the basic framework for environmental protection in this nation.

But now, EPA and the Clean Water Act are under attack. Trump seeks to slash \$2.4 billion from EPA's budget – almost a third of its current funding, and eliminate 50 programs. This would most certainly prevent the EPA from carrying out its core mission. The Environmental Justice program would be slashed by 78%, and the Environmental Education program by 94%. Added to this assault is the dangerous decision to pull back from the Obama administration's commitments to lower greenhouse gas emissions and reduce climate change impacts.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, whose history has been to prioritize polluters' profits over environmental protections, has already taken action to roll back the protections of the Clean Water Act. Congress has joined in these attacks and has proposed the following bills (and more) that directly attack our clean water protections:

- H.R. 1179 attacks citizen suits – a vital aspect of the Clean Water Act which gives citizens the ability to bring a polluter to court when government fails to enforce the law.
- H.R. 1261 would limit the number of waterways that are protected under the Clean Water Act.
- H.R. 848 would shield industrial meat production from waste management regulations and would bar citizens from taking action to address this pollution.
- H.R. 465 would allow cities and municipalities to allow sewage and polluted stormwater to enter waterways if they decide the costs of prevention are too high.
- H.R. 953 would allow pesticides be discharged into waterways without a permit.
- H.R. 1430 would impede EPA from using the best available scientific information when developing regulations and other safeguards.
- H.R. 1431 would jeopardize the independence of the EPA Science Advisory Board.
- H.R. 861 would terminate the Environmental Protection Agency.

What can citizens do to defend the laws, scientists and agency whose mission is to protect our environment and our public health? **Call your U.S.**

Representative and Senators to let them know their constituents value clean water and a healthy environment and are paying attention to these issues – and that we'll be ready to vote our values at the ballot box in the mid-term elections.

Join the March for Science and the People's Climate March

You can join millions of others in Washington DC this April to show your support for truth-based science and for climate justice.

The **March for Science** is on Saturday, April 22 (Earth Day) in Washington DC. Can't make it to DC? Satellite marches are being planned in cities in NC, including Greensboro and Raleigh. Find out more at marchforscience.com.

The **Peoples Climate March** is on Saturday, April 29, in Washington DC. Buses are being organized to go from Raleigh, Chapel Hill, and Greensboro. Go to peoplesclimate.org for full details.

Want to take part in Paperhand Puppet Intervention's project for the March? They are welcoming volunteers to help build puppets, make banners, and at the march carry banners and take part in a show. The next rehearsal will be April 23 at their studio in Saxapahaw, and more workdays are being planned (you can help paint even if you don't go to the March). For more information about volunteering, contact Jan Burger at janthehero@juno.com.



Photo by Elaine Chiosso

Members of HRA staff and board participated in the NC Community Solutions Workshop in Mebane. EPA Region 4 and NC agency staff were there to discuss resources for communities fighting pollution and environmental injustice. Kudos to Omega Wilson and West End Revitalization Association for their leadership.

The 27th Haw River Cleanup!

This March, nineteen teams with a total of 305 volunteers removed 417 bags of trash and recycling, 75 tires, and lots of other junk from the creeks, riverbanks, shorelines, and islands of the Haw River and Jordan Lake! Their efforts made our waterways cleaner and more beautiful for all of us to enjoy, and safer for the aquatic life that lives there. The original March 18 Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon date stretched over 2 weekends this year, with several teams deciding to postpone to March 25-26 because of the rain, hoping for better weather (they were right). Cheers for all our volunteers, including several scouting, school, and neighborhood groups, plus the HUGE effort of Clean Jordan Lake (with 150 volunteers). Many thanks as well to all our sponsors and partners – we couldn't do it without you!

The **Indian Valley Paddle Access** on the Haw River was cleaned up by Mike Reed's small but mighty team who took out 21 bags of trash, much of it plastics and styrofoam.

The **Haw River Hwy 54 paddle access in Graham** was cleaned up by Graham Boy Scout Troop 41 who persevered despite finding some pretty gross stuff – great team spirit! **Little Alamance Creek at South Graham Park** team from Alamance Community College was led by Daniel Sigmon. 19 volunteers collected 25 bags, 5 tires, 1 bike, 2 chairs, and a table, but said this was less trash than last year!

The **Swepsonville River Park** clean-up team, led by Guil Johnson, Alamance Co. Trails Coordinator, found discarded furniture.

The **Boy Scout Camp on Saxapahaw Reservoir on the Haw** was cleaned up again by the Homeschool Community Group (above) led by Mardi Magoo, who retrieved 6 bags of trash and a lot of sports balls and equipment. The **Saxapahaw Island and riverbank** team, headed by HRA's Emily Sutton, filled 30 bags of trash. And Joe Jacob led paddlers on a clean-up of the **Saxapahaw Reservoir**, with 5 more bags of trash!



Chicken Bridge in Chatham Co. is cleaned up year-round by Jeff Pettus, and **Dry Creek** in Chatham Co. is cleaner due to the efforts each year of Cathy Markatos, who picks up trash before it rolls down to the creek and river.

Haw River at Bynum had a great turnout (including the two volunteers pictured at left), with local Girl Scout Troop 1006; a group from Solitude Lake Management (also a sponsor!); and a group from Willow Oak Montessori School. They picked up 27 bags of trash, 3 tires, a frying pan, fish bait, life jacket, and a pile of golf balls!

At the **north 15-501 bridge area**, Simon Maarten Thomas led a group from Ferrington Green Scene, finding vehicle parts, a baseball bat and, ironically, a garbage can. On the **south side of the 15-501 bridge**, Anne Geer's team (below right) found tarps, PVC pipes, and other trash.

Paddlers led by Bob Brueckner and Larry Ausley removed trash from the **Haw River islands and river banks from Bynum down to the Robeson Creek Paddle Access**, pulling out 23 bags of trash, 2 tires, a car battery, and another garbage can. Special thanks to Lynn & Brenda Featherstone, who helped pick up and dispose of a lot of that trash.

Sarah Goddin and Scott Bryan picked trash along the **east bank of the Lower Haw River State Natural Area** near Redbud. Nancy Strong organized a team from Friends of the Lower Haw River State Natural Area to cover the areas on **both sides of the Hwy 64 bridge**, pulling out 22 bags of trash and a very heavy soggy sleeping bag!

Bolin Creek in Carrboro was cleaned up by Townsend Bertram Company store employees and friends – also a clean-up sponsor! Their haul included 9 heavy bags (disposed of thanks to Tom Patterson) and a Swiffer broom, yard signs and fishing pole. **Morgan Creek in Chapel Hill** gets cleaned up each year by a team from the Morgan Creek Valley Alliance, led by Johnny Randall with the NC Botanical Gardens.

Northeast Creek in Durham, led by HRA's Alex White and Northeast Creek Streamwatch, pulled out 10 bags of trash, a cat carrier, and a plant stand from this urban stream.

Robeson Creek at Town Lake Park in Pittsboro got cleaned up by Navigators Chapter 133 team of adults and children, a new scouting organization in Pittsboro. The **Robeson Creek team that cleans up through the town**, led by Gary Simpson, has postponed their clean-up to April.



And biggest of all, the mighty **Clean Jordan Lake** team of 150 volunteers worked near the dam at Jordan Lake, where trash from upstream finally lands. They picked up 183 bags (30 bags of recycling), 52 tires, and other assorted junk from the New Hope Overlook area. The weirdest item was a large CO2 pressurized cannister used for Coca Cola dispensing.



*Above: Fearington Green Scene makes the scene greener.
At right: Bolin Creek team cleans up (trash, that is)!*



Join Us in Thanking Our 2017 Clean-Up-A-Thon Business Sponsors

Abundance NC, Pittsboro non-profit for community resilience, abundancenc.org

Abundance Healing Arts (Kim Calhoun), Chatham Co, abundancehealingarts.com

Additions Plus Builders (Stan & Patti Stutts), Pittsboro, (919) 968-3737, sestutts@mindspring.com

Alicia Ravetto, Architect, Chatham Co. sustainable building, aliciaravettoarchitect.com

Auto Logic Foreign Car Repair, 200 West Main Street, Carrboro, (919) 933-6609, autologiconline.com

Automotive Solutions, 2809 White Cross Rd, Chapel Hill (919) 933-3884

Benjamin Vineyards, Saxapahaw, benjaminvineyards.com

Carolina Country Builders, green home design build, Chatham Co., greenhomedesignbuild.com

Crosswinds Boating Center, full service marina at Jordan Lake, crosswindsboating.com

Cure Nursery (Bill & Jennifer Cure), Native plant nursery in Chatham Co., curenursery.com

CW Dunn and Associates, CPA's, PLLC, Accounting firm in Pittsboro, (919) 542-5228, cwdunncpa.com

The Eddy Pub and Restaurant, Saxapahaw, theeddypub.com

Furniture Lab, creative commercial dining spaces, Carrboro, furniturelab.com

Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co., paddle guides and rentals in Saxapahaw, (336) 260-6465, hawrivercanoe.com

Hobbs Architects, located in Pittsboro (919) 545-2004, hobbsarchitects.com

Hope Valley Brewing Company, 4810 Hope Valley Road, Durham, hopevalleybrewingcompany.com

Integral Counseling Services, Miriam Lieberman, MA, LPCS, in Chapel Hill, integralcounselingservices.com

Jones Architecture, 2005 Beecham Circle, Raleigh, (919) 510-8186

Lynn Hayes Properties, real estate agent in Chapel Hill, 103 W. Weaver St, Carrboro, (919) 968-9989, lynnhayes.com

Marcoplos Construction, advanced green building, Orange Co., marcoplosconstruction.com

Mellow Marsh Farm, wholesale native plants and seeds, Chatham Co., mellowmarshfarm.com

N. Rouse Wilson, III, DDS, family dentistry 767 West St, Pittsboro, (919) 542-3502

Pittsboro Auto Care, 180 Sanford Rd, Pittsboro (919) 542-5891

Reverence Farms Café, 6956 South NC Hwy 87, Graham, NC 27253 (336) 525-2266

Saxapahaw Rivermill - live on the Haw River! rivermillvillage.com

Smitty's Homemade Ice Cream, in Elon and Graham, smittyshomemadeicecream@gmail.com

Solitude Lake Management, solitudelakemanagement.com

Swanson & Associates Landscape Architects, 100 East Carr St., Carrboro, (919) 929-9000, swansonlandscapearchitecture.com

Twig Eco Store in Chapel Hill, twigliving.com

Volt Salon, hair stylist in Saxapahaw, voltsalonsaxnc.com

Weaver Street Realty, 116 E. Main St., Carrboro, (919) 929-5658, weaverstreetrealty.com

SPECIAL THANKS to the following partners and supporters for helping us with trash collection, supplies, and organizing:
NC DOT * Chatham County Solid Waste Dept. * Saxapahaw Rivermill * Town of Pittsboro * Clean Jordan Lake * Carolina Canoe Club * Haw River Canoe and Kayak Company * Army Corps of Engineers at Jordan Lake * Alamance Parks and Recreation * Town of Graham * City of Burlington

Watershed Education News



Photo by Bas Kimlinger



Alex meets the Venus Flytrap at Greensboro's Earth Day.

from Alex White, Watershed Education Coordinator
(919) 542-5790; alex@hawriver.org

Spring is a busy time for watershed education. We'll spend the season working throughout the watershed to introduce students and community members of all ages to the Haw River. Check out our new projects and upcoming events!

This winter, we did an Enviroscope program with students at Hawbridge School in Saxapahaw, monitored the river with the Envirothon group from Margaret Pollard Middle School in Chatham County, and introduced

first graders to watershed health at Marvin B. Smith Elementary's science and technology day in Burlington.

On April 1, we set up a table at Greensboro's Earth Day Event at Kathleen Clay Edwards Library, to introduce visitors to the aquatic life in the streams of the Haw. We displayed a stonefly, damselfly, dragonfly, caddisfly, and salamander (see excited viewers in photo at right) found in the stream that runs beside the library. April 8 we will provide fishing activities for kids at the bilingual Family Fishing Fiesta at Jordan Lake.



Photo by Alex White

The NC Museum of Natural Sciences has provided Haw River Assembly with training and equipment to conduct the **Dragonfly Detectives program** with students in our watershed. Activities include identifying and catching dragonflies, identifying aquatic insects, learning about migration, insect life cycles, and dragonfly behaviors, keeping a science journal, and collecting and presenting data for citizen science research projects.

For the **Candid Critters Citizen Science Project**, citizen science volunteers set motion and heat sensitive trail cameras throughout the state to help the NC Wildlife Resources Commission learn about our wildlife. We've deployed a camera in one of Burlington's parks and will be moving the camera throughout the watershed for the duration of this project. We'll upload our first set of photos to our Facebook page in mid-April, so be sure to check it out and see what we've found!

Our **upcoming events** include: the NC Science Festival at North Park on Wednesday, April 12 (2 -4 pm), where we'll lead a Staley Creek cleanup with students as part of an outdoor spring break program. On Friday, April 28 is the 2017 NC Envirothon competition at Cedarock Park in Alamance County. Envirothon is a 25-year-old statewide program enabling students to become environmentally aware, action-oriented citizens. On Saturday, April 29, (11 am-2 pm) is Spring Festival at Willow Oak Montessori in Chapel Hill, with proceeds supporting the creation of a permanent campus for Willow Oak students.

You can support HRA by volunteering with us at our spring events or stopping by to say hello! Contact us at alex@hawriver.org for details.

The Learning Celebration is Happening this Fall!

The 28th annual Haw River



Learning Celebration will take place Saturday, September 23 – Friday, October 13, in Bynum, Saxapahaw, and Camp Guilrock. This hands-on riverside educational program teaches 4th-graders in our watershed about their river and how to protect it. To volunteer, register on our website, hawriver.org, under the Projects tab. We truly appreciate all of our dedicated volunteers, this meaningful program would not be possible without you! At left, the LC crew at Guilrock enjoys dinner together at the campfire, after a satisfying day teaching students. Come join us! Photo by Milada Vachudova



Standing in the Stream

Haw River Watch Project News from Emily Sutton,
Haw River Watch Coordinator, (919) 542-5790; emily@hawriver.org



We have two new teams in the River Watch Monitoring program, bringing our total to twenty-eight teams! There are still more interested, and we are pursuing grants to purchase more equipment to meet the need. If you are no longer an active team, but you still have monitoring equipment, please send me an email and I will come pick up your unused gear to supply new teams. Our data can soon be used by the Department of Water Resources as supplemental material for water quality assessments. Our data has not been able to be verified, but with GPS coordinates for all of our monitoring sites, the data will be much more valuable to state water quality departments.

A few monitoring teams have noticed excessive amounts of algae in their creeks, which could be due to a warmer winter, climate change, or unusual amounts of excessive nutrients in their streams. However, we have seen a return of the cranefly larvae in the main stem of the Haw.

I led four dedicated teams in the Clean-up-athon in Saxapahaw on what started out as a very rainy and dreary Saturday morning. Soon after we started, the clouds parted and all four teams collected a total of 35 bags of trash and 9 tires out of the Haw! Thanks to all of you who took part in cleaning up the watershed.

An updated map of the watershed is available on our webpage (hawriver.org) under "Publications." This map details current roads and all the streams in the watershed. With updated GPS coordinates for water monitoring sites, the map will soon show the locations of stream monitoring teams, making it easy to see where new sites should be.

I have been working with county Soil and Erosion Control regulators to launch the Muddy Water Watch Project. With this project, we will partner with county regulators to help identify any potential sediment erosion violations in the watershed, specifically from development sites. Our watershed is being developed at an alarming rate, and the regulators are happy to have more eyes on the watershed to find potential violations. If you are interested in participating, please email me at emily@hawriver.org.

Photos by Emily Sutton



Durham Creek Week was a success! I trained a group of participants of all ages in water monitoring at a tributary of Third Fork Creek.

The 2017 HRA Clyde Jones "Dragonfly" T-Shirt

Designed by Clyde Jones, this colorful print is on a soft eggplant purple 100% organic cotton T-shirt by TS Designs in Burlington, using their environmentally friendly non-toxic printing process.



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

Available at the HRA office in Bynum (919-542-5790) or info@hawriver.org to inquire about our hours or shipping), Townsend Bertram in Carrboro, Saxapahaw General Store, & The Joyful Jewel in Pittsboro.



Thanks to all the Cleanupathon participants!

Upcoming 2017 HRA Events

Updates and details can be found at www.hawriver.org, on our Haw River Assembly Facebook page, and from our weekly E-newsletters which you can sign up for at info@hawriver.org.

Saturday, April 22, Stream Monitoring Workshop, Northeast Creek in southern Durham. Join River Watch Coordinator Emily Sutton and the members of the Northeast Creek Streamwatch for a stream monitoring workshop on Earth Day on Northeast Creek, an urban stream in southern Durham county. All ages are welcome! For information contact Emily at emily@hawriver.org or 919-542-5790.

Late April or Early May, Walk along the Lower Haw River State Natural Area. A "pop-up" field trip to see the mountain laurel in bloom along the Lower Haw River State Natural Area - date to be determined by best bloom time! Let us know if you want to be informed, by contacting info@hawriver.org.

Saturday May 6, HRA's 28th Haw River Festival in Saxapahaw. See page 1 for details. For more info, contact us at hawriver.org, (919) 542-5790.

Saturday, May 20, Haw River Trail's 10th Annual YeeHaw! River Paddle from Red Slide Park to Swepsonville. More at thehaw.org or call (336) 229-2380.

June 24-24, 2017, Haw River Watch Monitoring weekend. For more info, contact River Watch Coordinator Emily Sutton at emily@hawriver.org, 919-542-5790.

September 23 - October 13, Our 28th Haw River Learning Celebration for 4th-graders. It's not too soon to sign up to volunteer! For more info or to volunteer, contact Watershed Education Coordinator Alex White at alex@hawriver.org, 919-542-5890; or go to our website: <http://hawriver.org/projects/4th-grade-field-trip/>.

For **paddle trips on the Haw River** contact our partners Haw River Canoe and Kayak Company, hawrivercanoe.com, and Frog Hollow Outdoors, froghollowoutdoors.com.



**Haw River Festival
Saturday, May 6
in Saxapahaw**

Address Service Requested

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