

# The Greenway News



## The Yadkin River Greenway Council Newsletter

EXPERIENCE THE GREENWAY...IT'S YOURS !

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**Message from the President's Chair –**

The Greenway continues to grow and become a great treasure and legacy to the citizens of Wilkes County. It will forever remain a lasting tribute to those who conceived it's grand design and purpose. Since it's conception, many have made it's existence and expansion possible by the use of their land through the granting of easements

The construction of the Greenway has been made possible through the financial generosity of individuals who have honored loved ones by the purchase of memorial markers, tree plantings and many other expressions of love and recognition. Major corporations and local businesses have supported the Greenway's construction and expansion through trailhead naming and sponsorships. Many other organizations, businesses, agencies and individuals have assisted its expansion through donations that are acknowledged, in part, on the Greenway's recognition wall.

The majority of the funding for the Greenway's construction has been made possible through the hard and tireless work of our Executive Director, Bill Clifton and other Directors before him, who constantly search out funding sources for the support and expansion of this project. We thank Bill for his energy, dedication and leadership in this endeavor

When completed, as presently conceived, the Greenway will become the recreational "spine" of the County, connecting all major recreational parks, trails and pedestrian walkways of the Towns of Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro and the County of Wilkes.

I would like to thank the board members who work tirelessly to continue this great effort and contribute their time and efforts. As my tenure begins, I would like to thank our past president, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue for her leadership, guidance, energy and inspiration and congratulate her as well on a job well done! I certainly appreciate her vote of confidence in me as well as that of the Board.

So, the next time (or the first time for that matter!) that you have a chance to experience the Greenway, just imagine: you are tracing the footprints of native Americans along the Yadkin and Reddies Rivers centuries before the colonization of the area by the earliest settlers along Mulberry Fields. You follow in the footprints of Revolutionary soldiers who followed the Yadkin on their march to win the countries independence at the Battle of Kings Mountain as you follow the Over Mountain Victory National Historic Trail!

If you haven't had a chance to experience this adventure, come and join us on the Greenway! It's your treasure to enjoy and experience!

Charlie White  
President, Yadkin River Greenway Council

## GREENWAY AT RIVERS EDGE IS NEAR COMPLETE

In 2007, construction work continued on Phase II, Segment 2 (River's Edge Segment). In January we completed the pedestrian bridge in River's Edge Park and all of the Greenway trail work from the Wilkes YMCA to the east end of the old runway. In April, NCDOT inspected and approved this portion of the River's Edge Trail (Segment 2A). In May, NC RTP inspected and approved the pedestrian bridge in River's Edge Park. In July, we completed the trailhead at the east end of the old runway. This trailhead was named the "ECMD, Inc. Trailhead" in recognition of ECMD's many contributions to the Yadkin River Greenway (YRG).

In June 2007, work began on Segment 2B of the River's Edge Trail. During June and July, the portion of the trail on the Venture Properties easement was constructed including paving, signage and cable fencing. During this same period, work continued on the final easement procurement for the Crowell property. This easement was signed in August and work commenced immediately on the final portion of the River's Edge Segment. In September, we completed all trail clearing, grading, excavation and erosion control work on the Crowell property easement. In October, the majority of the trail through the Crowell property was completed, including paving, cable fencing and signage. At the same time, work was in progress for the design of the cantilevered walkway directly behind the Crowell buildings closest to the river. The design work was completed in October and work commenced on the demolition and site preparation for the 190 foot long "Crowell Walkway".



Setting Pedestrian Bridge at Rivers Edge Park

During November and December work has progressed on the "Crowell Walkway" with the installation of foundations and earth backfill. Structural steel components are in the process of fabrication, and we anticipate to complete erection of this steel by the end of January 2008. The decking and fencing for the walkway is expected to be completed by the end of February with final completion of the entire River's Edge Trail Segment slated for early spring of 2008.



Paving new trail at River's Edge Park

This portion of the YRG is not paved, but it is constructed with stone base and rock fines surfacing. For the time being, this segment is terminated short of Brown's Ford Road until we are able to obtain the final easement from the property owners that adjoin Church and Church and Brown's Ford Road. Efforts to negotiate this easement have not been successful to this point. In June, the trail head sign was installed at the ACOE parking lot marking the start of this trail segment.

Phase II, Segment 3, (Brown's Ford Road to YMCA) continues under consideration with significant obstacles facing the YRGC in the acquisition of easement intents and final easements. As of this writing, none have been procured.

The Phase II, Segment 4 (Fish Dam Creek) portion of the trail extends from the lower parking lot at the U.S. Corps of Engineers (USACE) property and will ultimately end on the west side of Brown's Ford Road. During March and April of 2007, the grading and construction of the trail from the parking lot at the USACE to the end of the Church & Church easement was completed.

We have a \$235,000 grant from the NC Division of Water Resources for this part of the trail which we may lose during the coming year if the easements are not secured. Efforts continue to procure these easements, but success in the near future is not likely. In 2007, the YRG council joined forces with the Town of North Wilkesboro in applying for a Part F grant for the construction of Phase III, Segment 1, from Smoot Park to Memorial Park. The Town of North Wilkesboro held public hearings in January and the grant application was submitted in February. In August we were informed that we did not get this grant. The Town and the YRG plan to resubmit an application in the coming year for this proposed work. We continue to investigate the most feasible way to route Phase III, Segment 2 (Smoot Park to Lowe's Trailhead).

In April 2007, the Town of North Wilkesboro passed a resolution in support of including the Old Jefferson Turnpike along the Reddies River into the Yadkin River Greenway. We are currently working up a scope of work to be done to improve the existing Jefferson Turnpike trail. We expect to have this completed in early spring in hopes of beginning construction of the improvements in late spring after fundraising has been completed for this trail segment.

The NC Wildlife Commission continues to work on engineering for a fishing pier near the Pardue Crossing of Phase I. We expect construction of the pier sometime in 2008. With the River's Edge Segment of the Yadkin River Greenway nearing completion, a significant addition to the Greenway will soon be realized. The coming year holds many challenges for the "Friends of the Greenway" as we continue to expand "Our" Greenway.

By Frank Taracido, Construction Chair

## OVNHT CERTIFIES GREENWAY SECTIONS

September 29 a ceremony was held at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir where two recently completed sections of the Greenway were certified by the National Park Service as part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. Paul Carson, NPS Superintendent, presented the certificates to Yadkin River Greenway Council representatives Lisa Laufenberg, Freida Matthews, Janet Lyon-Cardwell, Alison Pipes, John Gyax, and Bill Clifton. The trail sections certified were the Fish Dam Creek trail from the east end of the Army Corp of Engineer property to near Brown's Ford Road and the trail section from the new pedestrian bridge at Rivers Edge Park east to the old Golden Needles plant. Speakers in addition to Paul Carson were Rebecca Potts from Congresswoman Virginia Foxx's office, Wilkes County Commission Chairman Zach Henderson, and Kerr Scott Operations Manager Terry Ramsey. The Guilford Fife and Drum Corps provided music and the Greenway Council provided lunch. All completed greenway sections along the Yadkin River are now part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.



Paul Carson & R.G. Absher promote OVNHT Display

National Public Lands Day was held Saturday, October 20 at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir. More than 300 area Boy Scouts participated in the various activities including work sessions, one of which involved a scout troop from Dobson who worked on the Greenway trailhead and path at the base of the dam, planted grass, and cleaned up trash. Freida Matthews and Bill Clifton worked along side the scouts.

The Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro Board provided the Greenway Council an opportunity to sell turtle adoptions for the annual Turtle Regatta at a booth during the "Shine to Wine" Festival. Also, during MerleFest the Council greeted visitors to Wilkes County with "Welcome to the Greenway" banners as they had the opportunity to walk the greenway between the campsites at the east end of the old runway and the Wilkes Family YMCA.

Another successful Halloween "Fun Walk" was held Saturday, October 27. Sponsored by the North Wilkesboro Police Department in cooperation with the Yadkin River Greenway Council, an estimated 6,000 people attended and gathered candy and other treats from 33 organizations that set up booths.

By: Lisa Laufenberg, Special Events Chair

## “ADOPT-A-TRAIL” PROGRAM ATTRACTS VOLUNTEERS

It has become very clear to the Greenway Council how very important it is to continue to have community support through our volunteers. In one of our Volunteer Coordination Committee meetings this year we decided to concentrate and activate the “Adopt-A-Trail” program that is badly needed to keep our greenway trails attractive and pleasant. In seeking individuals, families, and groups to adopt sections of the greenway, we ask the volunteers to weed, mulch, and landscape areas and to establish new flower and shrub beds, repair birdhouses and benches, pick up trash and remove small limbs from the trails.

In our efforts to find these caring community leaders, several groups and families have volunteered and have already worked their adopted area. They include: Tyson Foods’ Earth Day volunteers – the section from the Tyson Trail head in Wilkesboro along “Ray’s Way” to Pardue Crossing, Lisa & Wade Laufenberg – picnic area at the Reddies and Yadkin Rivers intersection, Ginger & Harvey Barlow – landscaped area near the Coffee Tavern, Alison Pipes, Jennifer Lankford and family – area around Greenway Recognition Wall, Sonny Church – landscaped area at the confluence of the rivers, John Battle & Family - from the deck of the Coffee Tavern to Pardue Crossing, Chuck Smithey – birdhouse repairs, and Master Gardeners – Reddies River Trailhead. Thanks to Lisa Pardue for grooming this area this past summer.

We are grateful and appreciative to the Boy Scouts in our community for their continuing support and for the Eagle Scout projects that take place along the greenway corridors: William Buchanan planted and mulched an area at

the confluence of the two rivers, and John Palmer constructed and installed bluebird houses along the newly completed trail in Rivers Edge Park. Michael Oro-



Michael Oroasco and friends work on ECMD Trailhead project

sco from Troop 336 landscaped the ECMD trail head at Rivers Edge Park.

It is the Greenway Councils hope that other scouts will consider volunteer projects to enhance the greenway trail along the Yadkin River.

A Granite mileage marker was installed near the new bridge at Rivers Edge Park in memory of Gabriel “Gabe” Taracido by his family and friends. A maple tree and plaque were installed near the intersection of the two rivers in memory of Pat McNeil Day by the Dan Day family. A nameplate will also be placed on the Recognition Wall in her memory. These donors and memorial gifts are a major and vital support in the construction and upkeep of our trails.

The Town of North Wilkesboro received a NCDOT Comprehensive Pedestrian Planning Grant. The first meeting of the steering committee was October 30, 2007. Bill Clifton & Freida Matthews are part of this newly formed board. The Town and the Greenway hope to benefit from this grant.

Even with all the efforts and volunteer hours to make our greenway beautiful and safe, we do have citizens who see life differently. On Veterans Day evening several teenagers set out to paint our town and our greenway with graffiti. But in spite of all this, thanks to the North Wilkesboro Police Department for their determination to arrest the individuals who vandalized our beautiful greenway and the County Parks and Recreation Department and the Town of North Wilkesboro Street Maintenance crew for the time spent in cleaning the trail surfaces and the benches.

Through the human spirit of dedication, contributions, creativity, ingenuity, and hard work the Yadkin River Greenway continues on its destination. These are the very human qualities that drive the Yadkin River Greenway to continue on its journey. The people of our Wilkes County community who dedicate their skills, time, money, and energy to create a better community for their neighbors and for future generations.

Those interested in the “Adopt-A-Trail” program or any project along the linear park corridors please contact Freida Matthews at 838-4938 YRGC Volunteer Coordinator or Bill Clifton at 651-8967.

By: Freida Matthews, Volunteer Coordinator

## VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY MAKE IT HAPPEN

Serving as President of the Yadkin River Greenway Council from July 2005 until July 2007 was an honor and a privilege. During that time, the Greenway Council was staffed with volunteer members whose hard work and tireless efforts was second to none.

Our Executive Officer, Bill Clifton, was at the helm writing grants for much needed funds to continue the Greenway project. The grants totaled more than \$130,000.00 and there were other grants pending at the end of July 2007 totaling more than \$210,000.00. Bill continues to apply for additional needed grants. Our fund raising efforts, led by Keith Johnston and Gary Johnson and numerous other Volunteers added to the much needed revenue.

Throughout the Community, Eagle Scouts completed four projects; Two Memorial "Mileage Markers" were installed, recognizing Donors and Citizens supporting the Greenway ; Tyson Foods sponsored "Tyson Earth Day" on the Greenway and a new inter-governmental agreement between Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro and Wilkes County was entered into, making sure the Greenway continues to be cared for now and in the future....

There were numerous Special Events, including "Greenway Day" , "Public Lands Day" and, of course, hundreds of you will never forget "Halloween on the Greenway", Which is the safest possible place for our children.....

The ongoing support and profound efforts of Everyone who has contributed to this project will continue, until Our Dream of the Greenway reaching from North Wilkesboro to Kerr Scott Lake, becomes a Reality.....

A very sincere THANK YOU to each and every Volunteer, Financial Supporter and Land Owner who has given to this Amazing Community Dream, The Yadkin River Greenway.....Enjoy the Greenway - It is all for YOU.....

Respectfully, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Past President, Yadkin River Greenway Council

## GRANT US THE (GREEN) WAY

During 2007 we were again successful in attaining significant grant funding. These include reimbursements from two grants approved in prior years from the NCDENR Recreational Trails Program; \$45,000 for the Fish Dam Creek Trail and \$40,000 for the Greenway Bridge at River's Edge Park. We also received the second installment from Tyson Foods, Inc of \$12,500 for the River's Edge greenway segment.

New grants awarded in 2007 include \$5,000 from ECMD for trailhead at River's Edge, \$30,000 from Lowe's Charitable & Educational Fund for the Jefferson Turnpike, \$8,000 from the National Park Service Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail for trailhead at Kerr Scott Reservoir, and \$30,000 Enhancement Grant from NC DOT to go with previously approved \$275,000 NC DOT "Moving Ahead" grant for constructing greenway at River's Edge Park, \$750 from Wachovia, \$1,000 from Wilkes Tourism Development Authority, and \$1,000 from Wilkes Community Foundation.

Several individuals and private foundations including Dwight and Anne Pardue, the Kulynych Family Foundation, the Mr. & Mrs. James N. Andrews Family Fund, Lanny & Diane Stephens, and Dan Day & Family made significant capital funding grants this past year. The County of Wilkes and Towns of Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro continued in 2007 with their funding support of Greenway operations with grants totaling \$14,500.

For the second year we received an extension to the \$235,000 grant awarded in 2005 by the NC DENR Division of Water Resources for proposed greenway from Brown's Ford Road along the north bank of the Yadkin River to the Wilkes Family YMCA. We need to obtain easements to receive the grant funding. Grants from institutions (not including individuals) since 1999 have amounted to \$1,413,000

## FUND RAISERS ARE “FUN”

Greenway fund raising events bring out not only our Greenway Council members, and “Friends of the Greenway”, but also many members of our community and thereby serve the purpose of raising money for Greenway administration, gaining exposure to the Greenway’s mission, and just having fun.

We held our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Turtle Regatta on Saturday, June 9 as part of Wilkes Heritage Day. 1765 toy turtles took to the Reddies River at the D Street Bridge and floated at less than mach 1 speed to the finish line at the greenway pedestrian bridge near the mouth of the Reddies River. Charlie Sink and Hank Perkins were again our judges. John Reavill won the first –place prize bicycle donated by Cook’s Inc. The Turtle Regatta netted \$9,311.

Thanks largely to Tyson Foods, Inc., we held our 2<sup>nd</sup> “Chicken Sale” on Saturday, March 31 and netted \$2,873.



Judges Hank Perkins and Charlie Sink retrieve winning turtles



Carolyn Frazier-Pardue and Freida Matthews sign in golfers

On Thursday, September 13 we held our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Yadkin River Greenway Charity Golf tournament at Oakwoods Country Club with 82 players participating. Hole sponsors numbered 51. The “hole-in-one” prize was a Harley-Davidson motorcycle sponsored by CrossRoads Harley-Davidson. No one won, but several golfers came close. The event netted \$7,140.

Thanks to all who participated in these fund raising events and for your support in building a greenway from Kerr Scott Reservoir to Smoot Park.

## GREENWAY COUNCIL ADDS NEW MEMBERS

*During 2007 Lee Bentley, Janet Lyon-Cardwell, Alison Pipes, and Chuck Smithey were welcomed as new members on the Yadkin River Greenway Council.*

*They joined the Council consisting of: Charles White, President & Chairman, Carl McCann, Vice President, Gary Cogdill, Treasurer, Vicki Church,, Secretary, and other Council members: Shelmar Blackburn, John Gygax, Gary Johnson, Keith Johnston, Mike Kerhoulas, Lisa Laufenberg, Steve Mathis, Freida Matthews, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Steve Steele, Sam Stroud, Frank Taracido, and Roy Williams. Executive Director is Bill Clifton..*

*Many thanks to outgoing Council members Dr. Tom Frazer, Gary Blevins, and Becky Lakey for their years of service to the Greenway Council.*

## ABOUT THOSE GAPS IN THE GREENWAY

The defining vision for the Yadkin River Greenway is to construct a nine-mile, continuous linear pedestrian path from W. Kerr Scott Dam along the Yadkin River eastward to Smoot Park in North Wilkesboro. At the present time three disconnected portions of this greenway have been completed, leaving three long gaps still un-built.

The westernmost completed segment begins at a trailhead in the parking lot at the base of the dam. It runs north across the face of the dam, then eastward on the north side of the Yadkin about 0.6 miles in total. It comes to a dead end near Brown's Ford Road because the YRGC has not been able to obtain easements for further expansion between that point and the Wilkes YMCA. The three owners of this land have not yet indicated any willingness to cooperate with the Greenway. Unfortunately this will probably result in the loss of grant money previously obtained for construction of that segment.

On a brighter note, within the next few weeks we will complete construction of a greenway segment almost 1.6 miles long between the Wilkes YMCA and North Collegiate Drive, near US 421. This segment was made possible through generous easements from ECMD, Inc., Venture Properties, Inc., and Dean and Jeanine Crowell.



From that point eastward to Pardue Crossing, the existing greenway link between the two Wilkesboros, there is another gap about two miles long. Although funding for this planned segment has not yet been identified, the Greenway Council recently secured easement letters of intent from three of the four property

owners who control this land. We hope to have fruitful discussions with the owner of the fourth parcel, in the vicinity of Curtis Bridge Road, in the coming months.

Another long greenway gap exists between Wilkesboro Avenue (near Midway Market) and Smoot Park for a distance of about than a mile and a half. The YRGC has obtained several easements for this planned segment but several more will be needed. In 2008 we are again partnering with the Town of North Wilkesboro in applying for a PARTF grant that would provide a significant portion of the funding for this project.



Beyond the original planned scope of the Yadkin River Greenway, another key segment has been added within the past year, the existing pedestrian path along the Reddies River from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to Suncrest Road. This path, historically known as the Jefferson Turnpike, will be upgraded when funds allow, but it will not be paved with hardtop. There is a gap of several hundred yards between the existing YRG trailhead near CVS and the south terminus of the Jefferson Turnpike. Our goal is to improve pedestrian access across this gap, and if possible, eventually eliminate the gap altogether.

In conclusion, a great deal of progress has been made in 2007 toward the long range vision for a continuous greenway between Kerr Scott Dam and Smoot Park. While obtaining easements continues to be a challenge, there is important work to do in other areas where that is not a problem. The YRGC will continue to pursue all opportunities that are consistent with the long range vision for the greenway.

By Sam Stroud...Greenway Council Member

**The Yadkin River Greenway  
Council Newsletter**

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## ***“FRIENDS OF THE GREENWAY” NEEDS YOU !***

“Friends of the Yadkin River Greenway” has completed its fifth year as a “grass roots” support organization. “Friends of the Greenway” added 26 new members during 2007 and now totals 199 who have joined. Of these, 70 have renewed their membership during the past year and we hope all will renew during 2008.

Contributions for the past 5 years to “Friends of the Greenway” now total \$44,925. These donations go along way towards covering the administration expenses to run the Yadkin River Greenway Council, thus enabling us to fulfill our mission of developing a greenway system in our community.

Annual membership is open to all people and, by being a 501(C)3 non-profit organization, membership dues are tax deductible to the extent possible.



We offer opportunities to our members to volunteer time on specific greenway events and projects, helping in the greenway office, and contacting prospective new members. This newsletter and other communications will keep our members informed of Greenway activities.

In January, based on membership anniversary date, we will begin contacting each “Friend of the Greenway” to renew their membership and to continue their support of the greenway. Regular memberships are: \$20 for individuals, \$40 for families, \$12 for youth, \$100 for businesses, and \$50 for organizations. Also to be recognized as a “Trailblazer”, categories are: \$100 for Daniel Boone, \$250 for Sir Walter Raleigh, \$500 for Henry Hudson, and \$1000 for Lewis and Clark.

Thanks again for your continuing support .If any questions...Phone: 651-8967. Bill Clifton, Executive Director