

The Greenway News



The Yadkin River Greenway Council Newsletter

2003—"A CHALLENGING YEAR"

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What a challenging year the Greenway has had. After a momentous 2002 with our dedication, 2003 began with the hope of linking to Wilkesboro and completing Phase I construction. Efforts to complete the Wilkesboro segment this year were thwarted by a combination of easement, rights-of-way, and state and federal compliance issues. Successes were the Recognition Wall, the Turtle Regatta, Becky's Park, and the Overmountain Victory Trail recognition, and who could forget the Halloween "Trail of Treats".

Presently, easement and rights-of-way issues are mostly resolved and, with decent weather, we should complete the Wilkesboro segment by summer. Our Future Phases Committee continues to explore options, and Phase II is in the early planning stage. Our *Friends of the Greenway* program has brought many

rewards and expanded our base throughout the county, with nearly 100 in membership. ✓ OS

I would be remiss if I were not to recognize the work of Bill Clifton, your Executive Director. Bill joined us in March and the Greenway never missed a beat. His attention to detail, community spiritedness, and dedication has made your Greenway efficient and productive. I speak for the entire board in expressing our gratitude to him.

Stay tuned to your newsletter, we are new to this! Thank you all for your support. It is a personal honor for me to serve the citizens of the community as your Council Chairman. Dick Sloop

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VOLUNTEERS ENHANCE THE GREENWAY

The Greenway Community Volunteer Committee was established in January 2002 to field requests from community organizations for beautification and service projects along the Greenway and to coordinate their activities based on approved guidelines.

Since the committee was formed, we have had numerous project requests. We extend our appreciation to all the people and volunteers for their dedication and hard work in making outdoor experiences along the Greenway more enjoyable and educational while contributing to a healthier community.

Among the many projects planned and installed by 8 Eagle Scouts, 3 Gold Scouts and 5 other volunteer groups are historic signs, benches, bird and duck houses, picnic tables, tree plantings, landscaping, paths, trailhead signs, bike racks, and trash can holders. Two groups have adopted portions of the

Greenway for trash pick-up.

A donor's 100 foot Recognition Wall, through the efforts of the Volunteer & Construction Committees, was built during the past year and dedicated in August honoring these many volunteers along with donors contributing \$1,500 or more.

The Volunteer Committee is currently engaged in implementing the \$3,800 grant from the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources to plant trees, and provide a kiosk and tree identification to promote urban forestry education and awareness. Two Boy Scouts have made requests for tree planting projects as part of this grant. More volunteers are needed to implement these enhancements. If you or your organization are interested in this or other projects, please contact the Yadkin River Greenway office at 667-8967Freida Matthews, Volunteer Committee Chair

✓ FRIDA

**ENGINEERING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:
A GREENWAY CONCEPT FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

Dr. Tom ✓

If you're over 50 years of age, you probably remember walking, skating or riding your bike to school. If you're under 15 years of age, such a notion is almost beyond comprehension. No car? No bus? No traffic? No parent or carpool to get you there and back? No way!

Well there is another way. It's a new way for the young and a renewed way for the not-so-young to get "active by design." This concept, encouraged by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, supports community infrastructure changes that encourage a more physical and healthier lifestyle for people of all ages as they go from place to place during their daily life.

How does that relate to Wilkes County residents and the Yadkin River Greenway? Just imagine a Greenway system that didn't just connect CVS, the Lion and Lamb and the Wellness Center. Imagine a comprehensive greenway system that actually connects the institutions and neighborhoods of our communities, such as schools, workplaces, parks, churches, and shopping areas.

Can we improve a transportation system that has engineered physical activity out of our daily lives? Must we wait in an idling car line to pick up our children from school? Or wait in a car line at the bank, the drive-up fast food window, or for our chance to turn left out of a factory parking lot in order to go home? How would it work?

The proposed expansion of the Yadkin River Greenway to include Yadkin tributaries and extensions into neighborhoods and shopping areas would accomplish much of this. Imagine a child who rides a bike from North Wilkesboro Elementary School to the Wilkes County Library or from Wilkesboro Elementary to the YMCA or Rivers Edge Park. Imagine walking or riding from the Tyson Plant after work to your home at Cub Creek Apartments. Imagine losing 10 or 20 pounds and dropping your blood pressure 10 or 20 millimeters just because you decided to walk to work and back each day. Imagine a reduction in the amount of money you spend each month at the gas pump, just to drive 3 - 5 miles to work everyday.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is setting an example through its Active Living by Design grant program (<http://www.rwjf.org/news/special/design.jhtml>) administered through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Public Health (<http://www.activelivingbydesign.org:9005/index.cfm>). Several communities will be awarded \$200,000 grants. A coalition of local organizations including YRGC applied for this grant in 2002, but was not successful. As more and more communities receive such funding and experience the benefit of providing a "healthy" transportation infrastructure, then state and local governments will become interested as well. An "Active Living by Design" component to our communities transportation system will improveDr. Tom Frazer, Past Council Chair

YADKIN RIVER BRIDGE & TRAIL CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

Frank



Mobilization began in January for the construction of the Phase One, Segment Three by awarding a contract for the fabrication and erection of the bridge over the Yadkin River to DLB, Inc. of Hillsville, VA. The contract for fabrication and erection of the bridge, less the installation of abutments, is \$141,000.00. In February, the Town of Wilkesboro initiated the submittal for an erosion control permit for grading and excavation work on Segment Three. The permit was finally awarded on June 6. Due to previous commitments of personnel by the Town of Wilkesboro, the actual grading and excavation work was not able to begin until September. Approximately 2,500 loads of earth fill were hauled into the gully in September and additional work had to be halted until property easements could be obtained. The procurement of easements had been in the works for several months. The easements from Steve Mathis and from the County of Wilkes were finalized in November. One final easement from Pete Glass is still under negotiation.

As part of the Segment Three construction, the Greenway ran into a delay due to FEMA requirements for a "no rise certificate" for the proposed bridge construction, as well as the previous segment completed along the Yadkin River. In August, the Greenway council retained the services of Vaughn and Melton Consulting Engineers to perform the hydrologic studies required in order to arrive at a "no rise certificate" for the proposed bridge. In October, we received positive news from Vaughn and Melton stating that a "no rise certificate" would be issued for the construction of the bridge abutments. Work continues on grading and storm drainage piping, and as soon as the final easement is obtained, grading will be completed on the trail to the Yadkin River. Final completion of Segment Three is scheduled for late spring of 2004.

During late spring and early summer of this year, work took place in the construction of the Recognition Wall located near the Wellness Center-Trail Head. The Recognition Wall and plaques were completed in August and the Recognition Wall was officially dedicated..... Frank Taracido, Chair Construction Committee

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS ADDED

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The Yadkin River Greenway Council welcomes two new board members, Carl McCann and Becky Lakey, whose three year terms begin January 2004. Carl, recently retired from the North Carolina Department of Transportation, has been a supporter of our Greenway movement. Becky has been active in our community for years and is a regular Greenway user.

They will join the present board consisting of: Dick Sloop, President & Chairman, Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Vice President, Gary Cogdill, Treasurer, Keith Johnston, Secretary and other board members: Gary Blevins, Dr. Tom Frazer, John Gygas, Gary Johnson, Freida Matthews,

Sheree Sloop, Steve Steele, Frank Taracido, and Roy Williams. Executive Director is Bill Clifton.

Five Council members will leave the organization at the end of 2003: Mark Church, who did a great job as Chair of the Construction Committee for over two years; Vaughn Hayes, who was a key solicitor in our Capital Campaign; Carol Stone, a long time Council member who has helped in all aspects of the organization; Larry Stone who helped make things happen time and time again; and Tony Lopez who contributed with his graphic arts.

Earlier this year, long time Greenway Council member, Ray Stroud, passed away. Our organization owes much to Ray for all he has done for Wilkes County.

GRANTS HELP BLAZE THE TRAIL

With the soon to come completion of the pedestrian bridge across the Yadkin River and the connecting trail up to the Old Wilkes Jail in Wilkesboro, it is noteworthy to reflect on not only the generosity of all the individual pledges and gifts but also on the grant monies that have been awarded to the Yadkin River Greenway Council. Over \$636,000 in capital grants have made it possible to build our Greenway, with the largest and most significant being the \$400,000 grant from The NC DOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Division.

Currently there are 6 active grants that we are using to complete Phase 1 and to initiate expansion into Phase 2. We are utilizing a \$10,000 matching grant from AdvantageWest to help pay for the flood studies required by FEMA. We have a \$20,000 grant from the NC Recreational Trails Program, and a \$25,000 enhancement grant from NC DOT Division 11 that will be essential to completing the Yadkin River pedestrian bridge and trail.

Also active for Phase 1 is a \$3,800 grant from the NCDENR Division of Forest Resources to plant trees and to provide educational opportunities for urban forestry.

Significant to the planning of the Phase 2 expansion of the Greenway up the Yadkin River is a \$74,000 Clean Water Management Trust Fund grant for "Easement Acquisition & Riparian Buffer Restoration". This grant will help determine the most feasible route as well as plant 15,000 trees along both sides of the Yadkin River providing an ecological protection for the river basin.

Lastly we await a \$5,000 matching grant from the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail to reimburse Wilkes County Parks & Recreation for the Greenway trail recently completed between River's Edge Park and Becky's Park behind the new Wilkes Family YMCA.....Bill Clifton, Executive Director

GREENWAY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS

The Yadkin River Greenway's Capital Campaign, begun in the fall of 2000, has successfully raised most of the funds needed to build the first phase of the Greenway, with access at the Wellness Center, the Reddies River bridge, the Lowes Home Improvement trailhead at the Wilkesboro Boulevard bridge, and soon-to-be Tyson Foods trailhead near the old county courthouse in Wilkesboro.

This year our board has focused on raising money to fund the day-to-day expenses of our organization, ensuring that we continue to move forward in completing the first phase of Greenway construction and planning for the phases to come in the near future. Lowe's Companies sponsored the grand prize for a raffle of four Coca Cola 600 race tickets this spring. Our Rubber Turtle Regatta, with a bicycle from Cooks as grand prize, was a great success, even though it was postponed from the rain-soaked Wilkes Heritage Festival. We have numbered prints for sale of the painting "The Greenway" created by local

artist William Nichols. Recently we sold raffle tickets for the original painting.

We started a new organization, *Friends of the Greenway*. Anyone can join. We ask for an annual donation to support the ongoing work of our executive director, who is key to continued progress on our Greenway system. If you use the Greenway and believe it enhances our quality of life, please consider becoming a *Friend of the Greenway* and be part of something pretty terrific. You'll receive our newsletters, a cool *Friends of the Greenway* window emblem and our thanks for helping with the cause.

Thanks to your generosity and that of many other citizens and businesses in Wilkes County, we have a beautiful Greenway running through the center of our community. We will continue to need your help as we expand and enhance our Greenway system in 2004 and beyond.Keith Johnston, Capital Campaign & Fund Raising Chair.

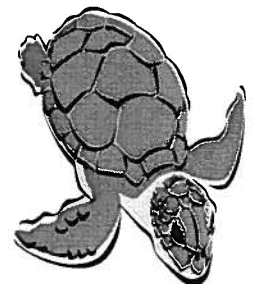
SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR GREENWAY EVENTS

The year 2003 has been a very successful year for Greenway Events. Beginning May 10 with the Future Generations for Change Hunger Walk followed by the Wilkes Chamber of Commerce Business Exposition on May 20 & 21st. Then the June 7 Wilkes Arts & Heritage Festival Booth.

On June 14 we held the first annual Turtle Regatta fund raiser. The special Recognition Wall Dedication was held on August 27. On September 20 we had the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail certification for the phase 2 "Loop Trail Extension" behind Becky's Park. Next came our

booth at the Brushy Mountain Apple Festival on October 4 and the big Halloween surprise event "The Trail of Treats" which had such a tremendous turn out of thousands. Our final event for the year was the Start with your Heart Kick-off on November 8.

Thanks to all the Greenway Council volunteers and friends of the Greenway volunteers for making these events so successful. We look forward to seeing everyone again in 2004..... Carolyn Frazier-Pardue, Special Events Committee Chair



And the race is on !

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"FRIENDS OF THE GREENWAY" NEEDS YOU !



"Friends of the Yadkin River Greenway" was started in the fourth quarter of 2002 stemming from a recommendation by Dr. Tom Frazer to form a "grass roots" support organization. Since then "Friends of the Greenway" membership has climbed to 88 members with contributions amounting to \$10,180. These donations go a long way towards covering the administration expenses to run the Yadkin River Greenway Council, thus enabling us to continue 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. We expect in the future to begin offering more opportunities to our members to volunteer time on specific events, special greenway projects, helping in the greenway

office, and contacting prospective new members. Hopefully periodic newsletters will keep our members informed of Greenway activities.

In January, based on their 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.

To become a "Friend of the Greenway" call Bill Clifton, Executive Director, 651-8976