

**INSIDE:**

► **Teacher and more**  
**Page 3**

▼ **Chill to the music**  
**in Bynum.**  
**Page 5**



## What's in your water?

By Tim Keim

While there is no doubt that modern water sanitation practices have nearly eliminated cholera, typhoid, dysentery and other waterborne diseases, it is equally without doubt that a significant number of the chemical by-products of these practices are highly toxic, carcinogenic and known to cause mutations of mammalian genes. The best-known local examples are trihalomethanes, which are caused by mixing the disinfectant, chlorine, with organic compounds that occur naturally in the Haw River, the source for Pittsboro's drinking water.

A 2002 study by the UNC-Chapel Hill Dept. Of Public Health showed that merely taking a shower raised the THM blood levels of human subjects four times its normal concentration.

Trihalomethanes (THMs) are found in Pittsboro's water supply at almost two and a half times the federally recommended maximum concentration. 0.080 parts per billion are the recommended maximum set by the Environmental Protection Agency. For the past year, the Pittsboro THM water level has been .197ppb. Because of Pittsboro's persistent non-compliance with

**WATER** continued on page 16.

## Protecting, respecting the Haw

By Elaine Chiosso

The Haw River Assembly (HRA) was founded in 1982, the year Jordan Lake was officially opened to the public. Citizens (many of whom had led the fight to stop the damming of the river) came together to form a non-profit organization dedicated to "protecting Jordan Lake and restoring the Haw River". One hundred-ten miles long, the Haw River flows from northwest of Greensboro down to Chatham County to join the Deep River and begin the mighty Cape Fear River. Jordan Lake is a 14,000 acre reservoir on the Haw River. Much of the lake is fed by the big New Hope Creek and its tributaries that flow through Durham, Chapel Hill and Carrboro.



HRA Board member Lynn Featherstone gives a guided canoe ride on the Haw at the Festival. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HAW RIVER ASSEMBLY

Based in Bynum, HRA leaders knew from the beginning that the key to protecting the Haw River and Jordan Lake would be to build a strong base of support and partnerships with the upriver residents of cities, towns and counties in the watershed. Preserving fragile river areas, promoting parklands and trails where people can connect with the river; advocating clean water policies at the local state and federal level, and developing educational and volunteer projects to raise awareness and understanding have been HRA's goals.

The HRA has met great success in meeting these goals. With strong support from HRA, there is now a new Haw River State Park in the headwaters above Greensboro, and a nearly 1000 acre river corridor park – the Haw River State Natural Area- in Chatham County. They secured a grant to protect the headwater source springs in Forsyth County, helped Swepsonville create a town river park, and have worked with Pittsboro to restore water quality in Robeson Creek.

**HAW** continued on page 7.

### Haw River Festival

May 10 at the old Bynum Bridge

Celebrate the Haw River With music, art, puppets, environmental displays and activities. You can go down to Bynum Beach and try some river monitoring and kids can take a short guided canoe ride on the river. Kids can also paint their own critter cut-out made by Bynum's own Clyde Jones.

A fabulous Old Town canoe will be raffled and there's a silent art auction that includes works by Clyde Jones. There's a "river of chalk" art project happening on the bridge, and much to learn from local organizations about the river, Jordan Lake and other environmental and community issues in our watershed. The great cooks at the Ruritan Club will have tasty food for sale all day. The festival is from 1-6 p.m.

## Siler City of old comes alive in photo exhibit

By Deborah R. Meyer

On May 16 at 6 p.m., a door to our history opens.

During this Third Friday Art Walk in Siler City, the Chatham Camera Club will celebrate its new photography show at its recently remodeled Chatham Club Gallery, 117 N. Chatham Avenue. Only club members did not take these photographs. The 50-plus still images displayed, and the three movies that will also be running, show Siler City from the year 1895 through the 1960s.

Duane Hall, one of the club members, has long had a love for historical photos. When he was on the board of the Chatham Historical Society he had an idea to gather old photos to share them with the community but finding them proved to be rather impossible. People would say they had some to share but then would not follow through on their good intentions. But like a pig who gets scent of a scrumptious truffle, this time Hall didn't stop digging until he turned up treasures. This show is not to be missed. Just looking at the photos that accompany this article should whet anyone's visual and aural appetite.

"I put up notices and ads in stores around town and asked for old photos. A lot of them came from Jimmy Cranford. I got them out of attics and base-



ments. I went over to Wilson Library and went through their historical collection," Hall said. A member of the camera club, a doctor, put up the notices in his waiting room.

People started to call, to share. Dan McMasters gave Hall a lot of photos, including one of his wife Linda in a gown. She was Miss Siler City. Coincidentally, another contributor gave Hall a picture of Linda posing in a bathing suit.

"Some of these no one has seen before. They were stored away in shoeboxes. I can identify 65 percent of them but the others, we don't know who



The Chatham Camera Club has put together a show featuring Siler City photos from 1895 through 1960s.

the people are in them. I am hoping people will come down and tell us whom they are. It will be fun, like a puzzle. I will put up a sheet so if you

**SILER CITY** continued on page 15.

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