

# Community Design Assistance Center

20th Anniversary  
Edition  
1988-2008

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Twenty years! It's hard to believe! Since its inception in 1988 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement for Post Secondary Education, the Community Design Assistance Center has assisted approximately 200 communities and employed more than 200 students on over 370 jobs. We have come a long way in 20 years from our first landscape architecture projects to the variety of landscape architecture, architecture, planning, and interior design projects and outreach work we currently do.



In looking back over the past 20 years, it's easy to see the impact we have made on communities. Our conceptual design work and engagement with communities has helped communities leverage over \$5,000,000 in funding and donations to help improve their communities. This includes close to 1,000,000 people in 200 towns, cities, counties, and small unincorporated communities across the Commonwealth. The Virginia Department of Forestry has recognized the importance of our work and since 1999 has awarded focused grant funding to the Design Center which we then grant out to communities and nonprofit organizations. Funding in this grant program has helped almost 50 communities, totaling almost \$325,000 in grant funding.

Though we continue our great work in communities, budget cuts across state agencies and at Virginia Tech loom overhead. It has become increasingly apparent that major fund-raising is needed for day-to-day operations so that we may continue to work with the many communities across Virginia in need of our assistance. Throughout our 20th anniversary year we will be working to raise \$20,000 as a start of a larger campaign. Many of you have been touched by our assistance. For our 20th Anniversary fund-raiser, we are asking for donations in increments of 2s: \$20, \$200, \$2,000, \$20,000. If the thousand plus people on our mailing list each gave \$20, we would reach our goal!

The 20th Anniversary Edition newsletter contains a sampling of current projects, recent projects, and success stories. The health of the environment is critical and we must all play a part. Even as \$20 spread across thousands of people can make a profound impact, so can small efforts related to the environment have a great impact when embraced by the masses.

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### MEET THE CDAC STAFF



**Kim Steika**, Coordinator for Landscape Architecture Projects



**Maxine Lyons**, Office Manager



**Terri Fisher**, Outreach Coordinator

## CDAC IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CDAC Open House in Honor of 2008 Graduates

CDAC hosted its second annual open house in honor of 2008 graduates that have worked at CDAC. The event highlights work done in communities across the state by the graduates and gives them an opportunity to show their work to family and friends. This year nine students who served as student designers graduated. Students were honored for their excellent work and contribution toward the mission of Virginia Tech – *Ut Prosim – That I May Serve*.



CDAC student employees attending the 2007 open house

### CDAC Receives Alumni Award for Excellence for Team Achievement

The Community Design Assistance Center has been awarded the Alumni Award for Outreach Excellence. The award recognizes "...sustained outstanding contributions of university employees who are engaged in strategic partnerships that enhance the economic and social well-being of individuals, families, businesses, and communities around the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world, and enrich and strengthen the university's discovery and learning missions." The Selection Committee commended the Design Center for our impressive years of outstanding contributions to outreach and community engagement.

<sup>1</sup> CDAC staff team achievement Alumni Award for Outreach Excellence; Erin Dolan, Chair, Commission on Outreach and International Affairs.

### Second Annual Lost Tour to be held in Tazewell County!

Last year's First Annual Lost Tour was a roaring success! About 40 participants rode along the back roads of Montgomery and Floyd counties. Riders came from as far as North Carolina to participate.

The Lost Tour 2008 ride will be in the Tazewell County area. Save the date for Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup>! All proceeds from the event go toward the *Lost Communities of Virginia* book, future Lost Communities initiatives, and helping Virginia's rural communities both through our outreach efforts as well as through the economic infusion of riders in the communities. Keep checking <http://cdac.arch.vt.edu> and [www.thelosttour.com](http://www.thelosttour.com) for details and continuing updates. If you have questions, contact Elizabeth Gilboy, Director, [egilboy@vt.edu](mailto:egilboy@vt.edu) or 540-231-5644.



Left: Motorcyclists lined up prior to takeoff at the 2007 Lost Tour Motorcycle event.



Right: Jack Davis leaving the parking lot to begin the 2007 Lost Tour ride.

### 20th Anniversary Celebratory Dinner

Mark your calendars for Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. CDAC will host a celebratory dinner at the Blacksburg Country Club to commemorate 20 "years of outstanding contributions to outreach and community engagement at Virginia Tech<sup>1</sup>" in communities across the entire state. The dinner will be an opportunity for CDAC alumni as well as past and current clients to visit, celebrate past accomplishments, and share future hopes and plans. Details to follow. Please check the CDAC website.

6PM

Nov 1st, 2008

Blacksburg Country Club

## CDAC DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

CDAC has recently formed a Design Review Panel, comprised of design professionals and faculty members to review CDAC design concepts prior to client presentations. The vision for the panel is two-fold: to give CDAC students an even better working experience by interacting with design professionals to discuss their work and to ensure our designs and design presentations are excellent. A team of two panel members participates in a design review for each project. To date, Nathan Brown, Matt Gart, Blaine Keesee, Michael LaRoche, Ryan Millard, Lori Tolliver-Jones, and Kim Rennick have reviewed projects. It has been a fun experience for all involved and the perspectives offered and feedback given has been invaluable! CDAC would like to acknowledge and thank all of our Design Review Panel Members:

**Ahmed Ali**, Adjunct Professor, Architecture, Virginia Tech; Architect Intern, Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company; Wytheville

**Will Belcher**, Associate ASLA, LandDesign, Charlotte, NC

**Nathan Brown**, Staff Designer, McKee Carson + Field Sport Concepts, Ltd.; Charlottesville

**Donna Dunay**, G. Truman Ward Endowed Professor in Architecture, Virginia Tech

**Matt Gart**, Landscape Architect, Virginia Tech

**Harry Gleason**, MLA, Downtown Revitalization Program Manager, Town of Buchanan

**Jim Jones**, Associate Professor, Architecture, Virginia Tech

**Blaine Keesee**, CLA, Senior Landscape Architect, Draper Aden Associates

**Brenda Landes**, RA, LEEDR AP, MarshWitt Associates

**Michael LaRoche**, CLA, Senior Landscape Architect, Draper Aden Associates, Blacksburg

**Ryan Millard**, Designer, LandDesign, Asheville, NC

**Lori Tolliver-Jones**, MLA, Director, Historic Smithfield Plantation; Blacksburg

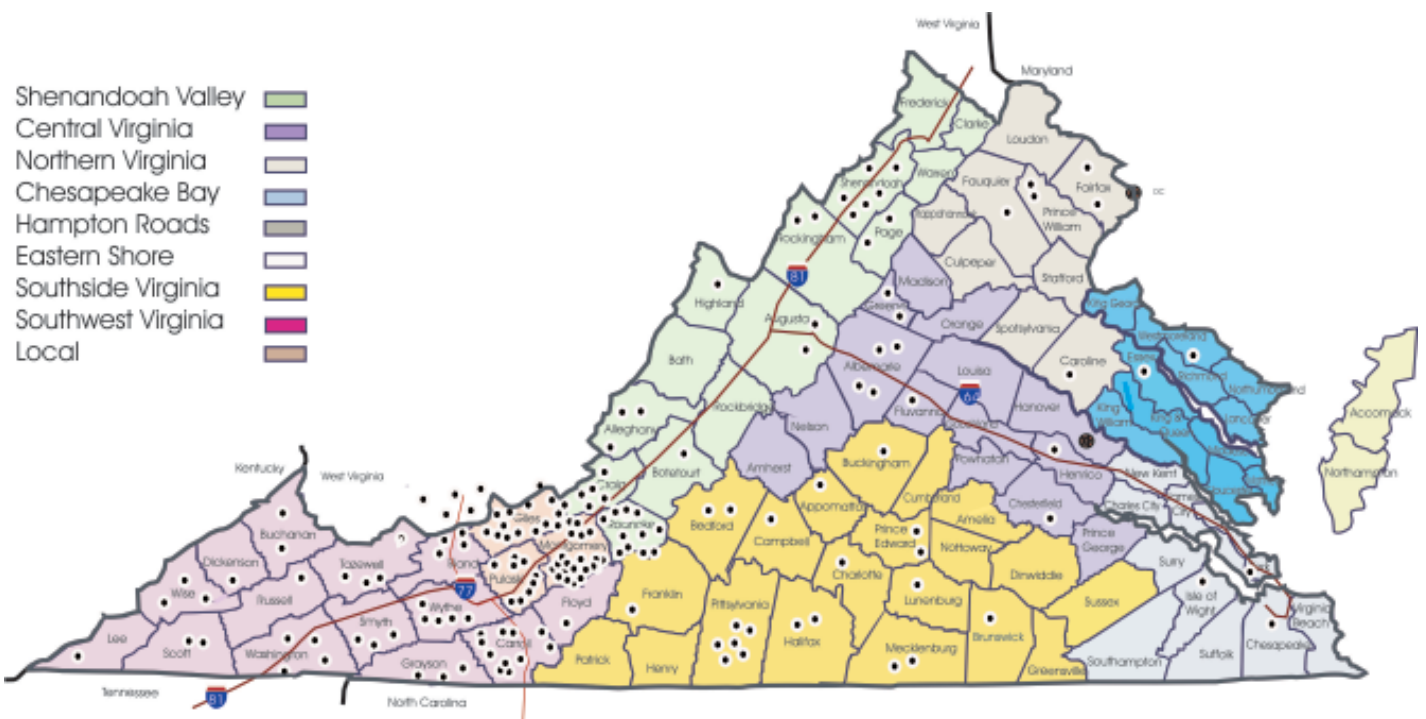
**Kim Rennick**, CLA, Landscape Architect, Anderson and Associates, Inc.; Blacksburg

**Bill Spivey**, RLA, Principal, LandStudio Professional Corporation; Norfolk

**Brad Whitney**, Associate Professor, Interior Design, Virginia Tech

*Did you know that the very first project at CDAC was a design for Riner Elementary School Playground?*

## CDAC PROJECT LOCATIONS 1988-2008



## CURRENT AND RECENT PROJECTS

Below are various categories of types of projects done at CDAC along with a basic description and listing of recent projects.

### Outdoor Classrooms:

Between 2007 and 2008 CDAC worked with Ervinton High School in Nora & Blacksburg New School to design and aid in implementing on-site spaces for formal and informal outdoor education. Allowing children and youth to step out of the classroom and participate in hands-on learning in an outdoor environment is crucial. Ervinton High School science teacher Hope Farmer has helped move the vision of the outdoor classroom closer to a reality by applying for and receiving grants to help fund project implementation and supplies.

#### Related Projects:

*Ervinton High School Outdoor Classroom; Nora Blacksburg New School Outdoor Learning Environment; Blacksburg*  
*Conceptual Master Plan for Boxerwood Nature Center and Woodland Garden; Rockbridge County*



Top: Blacksburg New School Outdoor classroom  
 Right: CDAC student meeting with meeting with Ervinton clients



*ATV Riders in Pennington Gap*

a conceptual plan for an ATV trail system in the mountainous terrain of southwest Virginia. There is great potential for a large-scale regional ATV trail system in this area of the state, bringing economic development opportunities. Both the trailhead and trail system are intended to

be family-friendly and stewardship-oriented. In addition to designing a trail that gives the public a designated place to ride, this trail system aims at offering to riders multiple opportunities to view the natural beauty and landscape of the area. The character that Pennington Gap and Lee County possess easily sets the framework for an ATV trail that is unparalleled by many existing ATV trails in other regions.

A CDAC team worked with the City of Radford and a local trails group called Pathways for Radford to develop a comprehensive and phased approach to increasing walking, hiking, biking, jogging, and other forms of trail recreation and transportation opportunities. This plan is being adopted into the City's comprehensive plan, which is currently being updated.



*Perspective of proposed trails in Radford*

#### Related Projects:

*Pathways Conceptual Master Plan; Radford*  
*Pennington Gap ATV Trail Conceptual Master Plan; Pennington Gap*

### Trails and Greenways:

CDAC continues to broaden its range of experience and positive community impact with conceptual planning for trails and greenways of different types and scales throughout the state. CDAC is also working with the Town of Pennington Gap to develop

### Park Master Plans:

CDAC has worked with the City of Danville, the Town of Mineral, Alleghany & Greene Counties, and a non-profit group in Dillwyn, Virginia to create conceptual master plans for parks of a variety of scales and natures. All projects have identified opportunities to incorporate low impact development measures into the projects



*Cross section of park design, Mineral*

as appropriate to provide opportunities for informal environmental education, demonstration of best management practices, and keen environmental stewardship. Examples of some of these measures include rain gardens and porous paving.

The conceptual master plan for Ellis Acres Memorial Park in



*Top: Design team walking the Anglers Park property*



*Left: Design team presenting Angler's Park Conceptual design to clients*

Dillwyn celebrates the dedication, integrity, determination, and accomplishment of teachers and students who served at or attended one of the former schools that were once located there. Working with community members to identify stories and qualities of the past as well as current community needs, the CDAC team developed a plan based on this information and the concept of a sculptural landscape – giving form to the past and shaping the future. “The idea of a sculptural landscape takes the site as ground for intervention into the layers of history to create a park for the future. Each element has been considered from a sculptural perspective...” (Lauren Doran, CDAC project intern). CDAC would like to recognize David Hill, from Hill Studio in Roanoke, for his role in connecting CDAC and Ellis Acres Memorial Park, Inc. and helping to initiate this project.

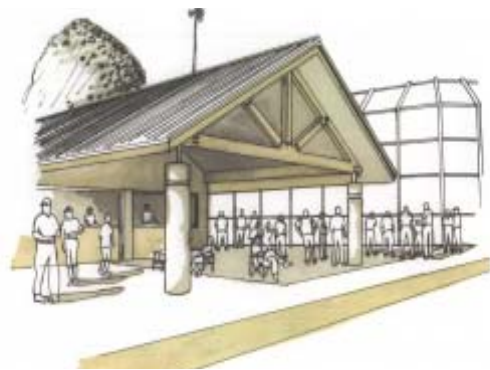
*Right: Dillwyn community members reviewing design options*



*Left: Perspective sketch of entry stairs representing Ellis Acres Memorial Park past struggles & rise toward education of the African American community*



*Related Projects:*  
*Anglers Park Conceptual Master Plan; Danville*  
*Col. Tom Dotson and Sharon Park Conceptual Master Plans;*  
*Alleghany County*  
*Ellis Acres Memorial Park Conceptual Master Plan; Dillwyn,*  
*Greene County Community Park Conceptual Master Plan;*  
*Greene County*  
*Walton Park Conceptual Master Plan; Mineral*



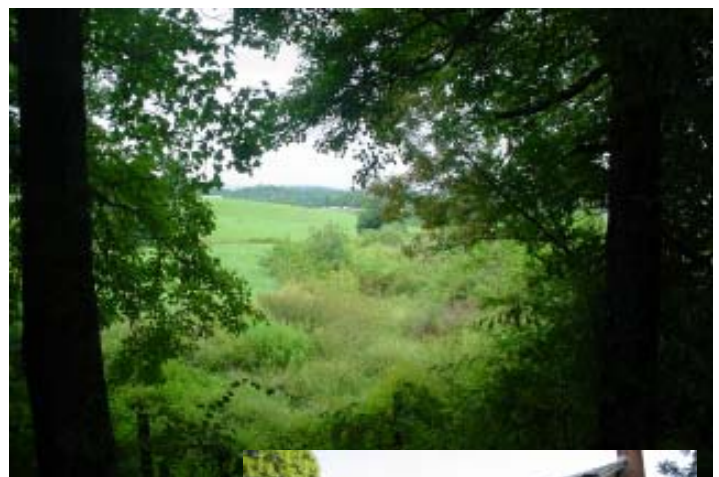
*Sketch of proposed concession stand for Col. Tom Dotson Park*

**Site Planning:**

CDAC has recently worked with two non-profit groups to refine visions and develop site master plans for two beautiful pieces of land that will serve as gems in their respective communities. Cornerstone Community Church plans to construct a church with the long term vision of adding support facilities such as recreational fields, trails, and possibly a school or medical clinic to serve both the church and broader community. Fairview in Abingdon, Inc. seeks to create an historically relevant 19<sup>th</sup> century village of regional significance.

*Related Projects:*

*Conceptual Site Master Plan for Cornerstone Community Church; Carroll County*  
*Fairview Village Conceptual Site Master Plan; Abingdon*



*Top: Site for Cornerstone Project*

*Right: Historic Hagey House on Fairview site*



### Downtown Design Improvements:

“Downtowns historically serve as the center of activity for residents and visitors.” (Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan). They should serve as sources of community pride and places of community gathering. CDAC is working with the Town of Amherst to create a town square within their downtown – a dynamic space that will visually express the uniqueness and charm of downtown Amherst on a day to day basis and will serve as a celebratory space for seasonal events, community markets, and other public gatherings. CDAC is also working with the Town of Blacksburg and a citizen-appointed 16 Squares Committee on a second project downtown improvement project. CDAC has been working with Town staff and the 16 Squares Committee to craft a document that pulls together available historic information for the 16 Squares original layout of town and cast a vision for what can be done in both the short and long term to identify, educate, and preserve.



*Design Team visiting the 16 Squares*

#### Related Projects:

*Amherst Town Square Conceptual Design; Amherst Blacksburg 16 Squares Vision and Master Plan; Blacksburg*

### Low Impact Development:

CDAC seeks to improve the quality of life of citizens by designing for their needs as well as the needs of the environment. These needs are in fact, complementary. Beauty, utility, form, function, responsibility – a design can speak to all these qualities. In the fall of 2006 and spring of 2007 a CDAC design team worked with the Town of Blacksburg to develop a conceptual design to improve



*Left: Wong Park Remediation plan  
Below: Design Team walking the site*



the visual and environmental quality of the detention ponds in Wong Park. The design also sought to provide a place that will become a community resource and a habitat for wildlife. The vision for this part of the park is to create a perennial meadow in the basin and a grass and perennial meadow around the perimeter. Plant species that control erosion and treat pollutants in storm water were recommended. Seasonal value of the plants and native species were two other priorities in selection criteria. Reforestation and the addition of trails and seating areas were also recommended to increase active and passive recreation opportunities in this area.

#### Related Projects:

*Wong Park Design Remediation; Blacksburg*

### Architectural Rendering:

CDAC worked with Habitat for Humanity of the New River Valley to develop conceptual renderings for Claytor Subdivision in Radford. The local Habitat for Humanity affiliate is planning a front porch community of ten homes with a common greenspace. CDAC provided conceptual drawings of the proposed community and developed marketing brochures to recruit sponsors for the houses.

#### Related Project:

*Visualizations for a Habitat for Humanity Community: Building a Dream; Radford*



*Right: Conceptual sketch of entrance to a habitat house.  
Below: Habitat for Humanity conceptual plan*



## Interior Space Planning:

The Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History, located on Millionaire's Row, occupies the 1856 Sutherlin House where Jefferson Davis signed the last official proclamation of the Confederate States in 1865. Today, the first and second floors of the Sutherlin House have been restored to the period of significance and the basement level is used as office and contemporary exhibit space. CDAC provided recommendations for improving the rear entry hall of the building, used today as the Museum's entrance. The design recommended furniture and finishes to improve the traffic flow while maintaining the historic nature of the building. CDAC also provided recommendations for improving wayfinding at the basement level to help visitors navigate from the house museum above stairs to the galleries below.

### *Related Project:*

*Conceptual Designs for Space Planning – Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History; Danville*



*Danville Museum rear entry hall design*



*Danville Museum recommendations for way-finding*

Did you know that the 3 smallest communities that CDAC has served were Dungannon (305), Nora (566), and Fries (614)?

## Outreach and Education

*Build-Your-Own Rain Barrel Workshop; Stroubles Creek Watershed; Blacksburg*

The purpose of this project is to educate the public on water quality and water runoff issues, reduce run-off in the Stroubles Creek Watershed through on-the-ground actions, and provide an opportunity for water conservation by residents in the Watershed. This will be accomplished through Build Your Own Rain Barrel Workshops conducted with residents in the Watershed. The workshop will consist of a short presentation about the watershed and water quality



and how various actions can affect quality and quantity and a description of a rain barrel and how it functions. Guided rain barrel construction will then follow. After construction, the group will reconvene for a questions and answer period and for closing comments. The installation of 25-50 rain barrels in the Stroubles Creek Watershed will serve as a pilot project and strong starting point for the larger goal of increasing volume control and reducing sediment in the Watershed through the installation of rain barrels and rain gardens. Grant will serve as seed money for carrying out the workshops on an on-going basis; first in the Blacksburg area and later to SWVA.



*Maxine Lyons painting the CDAC rain barrel*



## Student, Faculty, & Staff Project Involvement

CDAC continues to offer students excellent opportunities to apply their design skills to real-world projects and help specific Virginia communities in tangible ways. This provides students with invaluable experience as well as an often much needed source of income during their college career. CDAC employed architecture, building construction, environmental design and planning, interior design, geography, horticulture, landscape architecture, urban forestry, and urban and regional planning students on projects highlighted in this newsletter addition:

**Alexis Alvey**, graduate student, urban forestry  
**Will Belcher**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Michael Blake**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Jordan Clough**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Dan Dart**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Kartiki Deshpande**, graduate student, architecture  
**Lauren Doran**, Master of Landscape Architecture  
**Eliza Furedy**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Yogesh Gaikwad**, graduate student, building construction science and management  
**Jason Galloway**, graduate student, landscape architecture  
**Meghany Grundy**, undergraduate, interior design  
**Chris Henry**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Kent Hipp**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Brian Jank**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Hooman Koliji**, doctoral candidate, environmental design and planning  
**Matthew Landes**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Brad Milne**, graduate, landscape architecture  
**Christina Osborn**, undergraduate student, landscape architecture  
**Timothy Owen**, undergraduate, geography  
**Shruti Rathore**, graduate student, urban and regional planning  
**Doug Rodes**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Nathan Rosso**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Joe Sampsell**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Chris Shern**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Jonathan Strumfeld**, undergraduate student, landscape architecture  
**Caroline Wallace**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Timothy Walters**, undergraduate, landscape architecture  
**Jacob Whitehouse**, undergraduate, horticulture  
**Brian Wolyniak**, doctoral student, forestry  
**Yining Xu**, graduate, landscape architecture

Kim Steika, Elizabeth Gilboy, and Terri Fisher provided staff oversight for all of the aforementioned CDAC projects. CDAC would like to recognize the following faculty members for their assistance and input during this project period:

**Jack Davis**, Reynolds Metal Professor and Dean, CAUS  
**Susan Day**, Research Assistant Professor, Forestry  
**Wendy Jacobson**, Associate Professor, Landscape Architecture  
**Greg Tew**, Associate Professor and Chair, Interior Design  
**Brad Whitney**, Associate Professor, Interior Design and Architecture  
**Eric Wiseman**, Assistant Professor, Forestry

*Did you know that over 200 students have been employed on just over 370 projects?*

*Did you know that CDAC has served over 195 communities?*

## LOST COMMUNITIES OF VIRGINIA

Every project at CDAC contains an element of the historical. Whether we look at the historical uses of land where we are designing a park, a community where we are providing streetscape recommendations, or a building where we are creating conceptual plans for a new use, the historical aspect informs our designs by emphasizing the sense of place and uniqueness of each community.

The *Lost Communities of Virginia* project takes the historical aspect and sense of place a bit further. Rather than having the usual design focus, *Lost Communities of Virginia* focuses on 30 communities, their past and present, and what we can learn from them. “Lost communities” are places that once had an industry, transportation mode, or way of life that has been lost over time, taking with it the vitality of the place, but leaving buildings and residents that can tell the story of the past. For example:

**Pamunkey Reservation**, home of descendants of Powhatan, tells the story of the struggles of Virginia Indians beginning with the earliest English settlement of Virginia.



Pamunkey



Pocahontas

**Pocahontas**, whose coal miners supplied fuel for the U.S. Navy during World War I, tells the story of industry, natural resources, and what happens when the resources run out.

Did you know CDAC has over 5,000  
Lost Communities photographs?

**Sweet Chalybeate**, one of the nearly 70 mineral springs resorts on Virginia’s border with West Virginia, tells the story of the leisured class and how war and advancements in medicine reduced the lure of the springs.



Sweet Chalybeate

**Boydton**, the county seat of Mecklenburg County, tells the story of how transportation changes affected how people use the courthouse and the surrounding businesses.



Boydton

Each community is unique in its own way, yet is typical in its local battle to survive as a company left town, a railroad stopped transporting passengers, a road bypassed the place, the services provided became obsolete, and today, as development encroaches. Why do many of these places continue to struggle while others are beginning to revitalize? What conclusions can we draw about these widely varied places? Are there lessons that can be learned from the 30 *Lost Communities of Virginia* that can be applied to other towns?

The stories of each of the 30 *Lost Communities of Virginia* are told through historical sketches, interviews with residents, contemporary photographs, and maps in an upcoming book. Look for the *Lost Communities of Virginia* photographic exhibit at a gallery near you. Sales of note cards, matted prints, calendars, and chapter sponsorships help to cover book publication costs. To learn more, visit [cdac.arch.vt.edu/lost.html](http://cdac.arch.vt.edu/lost.html).

If you would like to help the  
*Community Design Assistance  
Center*



continue design work for Virginia communities



Please make a donation  
during the



# 20th Anniversary



For your convenience,  
a donation form is included on the next page.



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101 South Main Street, Suite 2  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

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Email: cdac@vt.edu

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If you would like to make a donation to the Community Design Assistance Center please use the form below. All donors will be recognized.

Please make checks payable to:  
TREASURER OF VIRGINIA TECH

Clip and mail this donation form with your check to:  
Attention: Maxine Lyons  
Community Design Assistance Center  
101 South Main Street, Suite 2  
Blacksburg, VA, 24061

I would like to help CDAC continue to help communities so I would like to donate:  
\$20  \$200  \$2,000  \$20,000  Other (please specify below

All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Click and Pledge is available for use of credit card through the CDAC website at <http://cdac.arch.vt.edu>