



Volume 22, Issue 2

March/April 2014

President's Message

Greetings!!

So is it Spring yet!?! The weather as everyone knows has been something else this winter. Snow one week, 60+ temperatures the next. There was a time I really enjoyed the snow but I'm so over winter!

While not a lot of new information to share, we are still seeking a permanent newsletter editor. If you like receiving a newsletter, please consider whether you would be willing to take on this task. I fear if we don't get someone to step up in next few months, the ODATC Board may be put in the position of ending the production of the Walker. Club members will need to rely on the website for club information, which I know may result in a loss of some of our members. The reality these days is many clubs and organizations are moving toward electronic newsletters or none at all, even the electronic version requires an editor.

As we move into spring and hiking season, the maintainers will soon be returning to the AT to see how things fared this winter. If the weather cooperates, the first monthly maintenance trip is scheduled for March 15th. If you are interested in more information, please be sure to contact Lori Ando at odtc.trailmaint@gmail.com. Also, contingent on the weather, border monitoring will be going on until the leaves begin to grow again. This can be an interesting activity and is definitely different than typical hiking. For more information on this club function, please contact Karl Huber at odtc.landmgmt@gmail.com. Also, I must get in the plug for the Rockfish to Reeds Gap trail blog at rockfishtoreeds.blogspot.com or you can go to the club website to find a link to the blog. There are some beautiful pictures posted of the mountains and trail from this time of year.

I have been so amazed at the number of hikes and activities being offered to club members. Jim Hunt and Ted McGarry, our new activity co-chairs, are doing a great job coordinating these hiking opportunities. My thanks to all those hike leaders who are stepping up to keep a variety of opportunities available to club members. A new approach is going to be implemented using Meetup.com. Several members have agreed to try this social media outlet as a way to attract new and younger individuals to our club. We are also hoping that this will be an avenue to expand our Outreach efforts.

I mentioned in the last Walker that 2014 is the 45th Anniversary of ODATC. We are still looking for volunteers to participate on the planning committee. Please let me know if you have an interest in assisting the committee or some ideas for this celebration. More information will be coming via email and in the next Walker.

Happy Trails!
Theresa

ODATC Celebrates its 45th Birthday

From the ODATC Archives:

Minutes - Appalachian Trail Club Meeting, October 19, 1969 3:00pm

On October 19, 1969, a group met at First Baptist Church House on Monument Avenue to organize a local Appalachian Trail Club. Officers elected were: President – Tom Pearson; Vice-President – Ed Woodward; Treasurer – Gene Potter; Secretary – John Farmer; Publicity Chairman – Charles Smith; Program Chairman – Clyde Shepard; Hikemaster – Bill Spencer; and Assistant Hikemaster – Bill House.

The Club's name is: Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club. A Constitution and By-laws was ratified and adopted. Also, the club voted to become a member of the Appalachian Trail conference, the parent organization having jurisdiction over the entire 2,000-mile Appalachian Trail system. The Club Treasurer was instructed to send the \$15 subscription fee as soon as feasible and the Secretary to notify the Trail Conference of the newly formed Club and its officers.

The stated purpose of the club is to promote the Appalachian Trail and its facilities and to conduct organized hikes on the Appalachian Trail plus bringing people together interested in hiking the Trail.

ODATC Hike Rating Codes

Hiking boots are strongly recommended for all hikes. Hikers must be properly equipped, aware of their limitations & hike within their ability. In the interest of safety, activity coordinators may refuse to allow participation by club members or their guests.

Terrain

- 1 = Very Strenuous
- 2 = Strenuous
- 3 = Moderate
- 4 = Easy

Distance

- A = More than 13 miles
- B = 9 to 13 miles
- C = 5 to 9 miles
- D = Under 5 miles

CARPOOLING Please honor the following suggested donation to your driver when carpooling to and from hikes: \$10 per rider for travel to and around the Charlottesville area (60-70 miles approx.) \$15+ per rider for travel beyond Charlottesville (over 75 miles).

Trips, Treks, and Talks *Ted McGarry & Jim Hunt, Contributors*

Welcome to an abundance of winter activities – no hibernating for this bunch!! Lots of choices to keep you busy until the spring thaw. We will have our new display board and club literature available both nights of the film festival (Friday March 7 & Saturday March 8). If you are interested in helping man our display please contact Jenni Pendergrass (jennipendergrass@aol.com or 804-221-3226).

February 28 - March 2 (Friday-Sunday) Bear Creek State Park Cabin Trip

Shake off the winter blues. Join us for a Fri-Sat night weekend stay in one of the State Park Lodges. We'll have a group hike of the Willis River Trail (15 miles on Saturday) with possible option of 9 miles Sat and 6 miles Sun. Group meal on Saturday night. (Cost approx. \$36-\$40 for weekend). You will need to register as early as you can and send payment by **February 15th** to Howard to reserve your spot. Limited to 16. Contact Howard Davis at howardsuedavis@juno.com or 434-964-1242 or Jenni Pendergrass at 804-221-3226 or jennipendergrass@aol.com.

March 5 (Wednesday) Richmond Liberty Trail – RVA (D/4)

Bill Tennant (282-0590 or Willyten10@aol.com). Let's try out some of the new Liberty Trail as outlined by Bill Martin at the Valentine Richmond History Center. We'll walk about 5 miles around the Richmond downtown and hit the highlights. We'll walk past the Capitol, the White House of the Confederacy, The John Marshall house, and much more. This is primarily a walk, so we won't be going in any of the locations, but it will include a few stories as we walk. If you haven't explored downtown for a while, come join us. Meet in the free parking lot on Tredegar Street between the 2nd St. connector and the Lee Bridge near The American Civil War Center (Tredegar) at 9:50 AM.

March 9 (Sunday-Meetup), Classic Richmond Neighborhoods - RVA (D/4)

Jeff Samuels (796-7949 or jefflsamuels@yahoo.com). Expect 9-13 miles of easy to moderate terrain. Check the website for hike details to be announced later and there will be two electronic announcements.

March 12 (Wednesday) James River Loop - North & South Banks - RVA (C/3)

Jim Hunt (730-2364 or hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com). This 7 mile hike starts on the trail on the north bank of the River, goes through Maymont, crosses the Boulevard Bridge, proceeds through James River Park on the lower trail and re-crosses the River over Belle Isle and the pedestrian bridge, ending at the cars. Meet in the free parking lot on Tredegar St. between the 2nd St. connector and the Lee Bridge near The American Civil War Center (Tredegar). Bring water and lunch and plan to be on the trail about 4 hours. Meet at 9:50 AM.

March 12 (Wednesday lunch at SMV) Lyme Disease Transmission Prevention

Presented by David N. Gaines, PhD, State Public Health Entomologist, Virginia Department of Health Division of Environmental Epidemiology. This is a Lunch Break Science event at the Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 W. Broad St. Its subject is relevant to those of us who spend time in the woods or just in our own yard. Pack a lunch and come on down. Free. Noon to 1:00 pm.

March 14-16 (Weekend) Prince William Forest State Park Car Camping – Northern Virginia

Howard Davis (434-964-1242 or howardsuedavis@juno.com). Car camping at Oak Ridge Campground. There is a \$5.00 per car entrance fee and \$20.00 (Sr. Pass; \$10) per night for camping. Heated Bathroom & Hot Shower available. (2 tents -6 people per site.) Option to camp on Sunday night. Current Plan is a 6-8 mile Sunday Day Hike to the Great Falls area of the Potomac River. Saturday options include Prince William Forest Day Hike or Visit to DC Mall.

March 19 (Wednesday) Grove Avenue Neighborhoods RVA (C/4)

Jack Martin (678-8083 or rjmartinii@gmail.com) Walk the West End neighborhoods adjacent to Grove Avenue from Hamilton Street to Libbie Avenue. 5 miles. Meet at the intersection of Hamilton Street and Hanover Avenue at 9:50 AM.

March 22-23 (Sat/Sun) Overnight Camp-out - Breemo Plantation in Fluvanna County (D/4)

Jenni Pendergrass (jennipendergrass@aol.com or 804-221-3226). Enjoy a rare opportunity to hike the woodland trails and pathways of historic Breemo Plantation, a 3,500 acre property located along the James River and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. You can arrive anytime on Saturday morning and we plan to begin our guided hike (approximately 7 miles) around 1:00 in the afternoon. We'll pass by the 3 historic homes, view the river, and hear the history of General John Hartwell Cocke's development of the plantation and its homes (Upper Breemo, Recess and Lower Breemo). After the hike it's time to kick back, have some dinner and enjoy a bonfire to cap off the day. We'll have some chili cooking for dinner for the group or it's a quick ride into Fork Union if you want to do dinner on your own. You can bring your tent (or inside sleeping space is available) if you'd like to spend the night. For those staying the night we'll have a big breakfast on Sunday morning before you head back to Richmond. There will also be an option for some additional hiking/history on Sunday morning. Our host & guide for the weekend is Woody Cumbo, long-time property manager of Lower Breemo, who has graciously offered us the use of his home on the grounds for our overnight stay. Directions will be provided.

March 23 (Sunday- meetup) 5 mile hike in RVA (D/4)

Dave Prestia (389-9099 or david@prestia.us) See web-site for details.

March 26 (Wednesday) Tredegar to Chapel Island RVA (D/4)

Martha James (883-6252 or 516-3218 cell or Martha james@yahoo.com). Meet at the free parking lot on Tredegar Street between the 2nd St. connector and the Lee Bridge near The American Civil War Center (Tredegar). We'll start there, go along the north bank of the James River through the Canal Walk, to Great Shiplock Park, then Chapel Island and return. Lunch optional. Meet at 9:50 AM.

March 29-30 (Sat-Sun.) Calf Mountain Overnight Backpacking - SNP (C/3)

Jenni Pendergrass (japendergrass@hanovercounty.gov or 804-221-3226) This is an overnight backpacking trip up to the Calf Mountain Shelter. The shelter is located 7 miles north from the southern entrance of the Shenandoah National Park so the total mileage is 14 miles. This is a moderate backpacking trip so come and join the fun!!!! Tent sites are available. Limited to 8 participants. Meet at the I-64 Exit 173 Rockville/Manakin Park & Ride at 8:00 AM.

March 29 (Saturday) - AT/Laurel Prong Loop aka Hoover Camp (C/3)

David Olli (864-1461 or dolli@smv.org). Beautiful, intermediate-level, 7.2 mile hike with a nod to Virginia's 8th U.S. President. Starting from Milam Gap we'll head up the AT, down the Laurel

Prong Trail to President Hoover's mountain retreat for lunch before a final climb up the pretty Mill Prong Trail. Trip is dependent on Skyline Drive being open. Group size limited to 12, no young children or pets, please.

March 30 (Sunday) Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail –Hike or Bike - South of Charlottesville (B/4)

Ted McGarry (218-1238) This is my annual ODATC hike (Bikes may be ridden also) on this rails-to-trail adaptive reuse of the former railroad bed about 2 hours west of Richmond in the Blue Ridge mountains of Nelson County. The Trail has a 100 foot total elevation change and the scenic Piney and Tye River valley views are best before foliage appears. This is an out and back hike for a total of about 10 miles or a minimum of 4 hours. Bring water and lunch for the trail. A porta potty is available at the trailhead. Carpool from Rockville Park and Ride I-64 West Exit 173. Directions via Route 60 from Chesterfield are available by email. Call to confirm. www.trailink.com/trail/virginia-blue-ridge-railway-trail.aspx

March 30 (Sunday - meetup) Old Rag Mountain - SNP (C/1)

Dave Prestia (389-9099 or david@prestia.us). Classic Day Hike located in the Shenandoah National Park north of Madison, Va. The hike will be 8 miles in length and strenuous enough that you should have some previous hiking experience. Limited to 12. Must sign up for this hike on Meet-Up. Hike organizer will provide more details to hike attendees. Meet at Rockville/Manakin Park and Ride I-64 West Exit 173 at 8:00 AM.

April 2 (Wednesday) Downtown Canal Walk and Church Hill Flowers RVA (C/4)

Jim Hunt (730-2364 or hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com). Meet at the free parking lot on Tredegar Street between the 2nd St. connector and the Lee Bridge near The American Civil War Center (Tredegar) and we will start the Canal Walk. Continue east to the Great Ship Lock, climb Libby Hill Park on Church Hill and return by St. John's Church. Approximately 6 miles total. The many species of Spring flowers on Church Hill are beautiful this time of year. Meet at 9:50 AM.

April 5 (Saturday) South River Falls - SNP (B/3)

Bill Tennant (282-0590 or Willyten10@aol.com) This 10 mile circuit hike with 1,800 ft. elevation change, is in PATC's *Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park*. The hike features the third largest waterfall, Kites Deadening, an old cemetery, and the Pocasin mission ruins in Shenandoah National Park. Contact Bill for time and meeting place.

April 6 (Sunday) Hike Leader Dinner

Jim Hunt (hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com or 804-730-2364) If you lead a hike that was posted on the ODATC web-site in 2013 the club invites you to a nice dinner. BYOB. RSVP to Jim by April 2 for details.

April 7 (Monday) AT: Montebello Fish Hatchery to Tye River - Nelson County (B/2)

Howard Davis (434-964-1242 or howardsuedavis@juno.com). An 11.6 mile AT hike highlighted with visits to Spy Rock and Priest. Not an introductory hike with steep downhill descent to Tye River at the end. Hike limited to 12.

April 9 (Wednesday) Landmark/Demonstration Forest Trails at Montpelier - Orange County (D/3)

Brad Swingle (594-2347). Hike about 3 miles over easy to moderate trails in the James Madison Landmark Forest and the Montpelier Demonstration Forest. Bring a lunch to eat in the picnic

area. Tour Montpelier, the home of James Madison: **\$18.00**. Tour the segregated train station. Hike the Gilmore Farm trail (easy 1 mile loop). Carpool from Oilville Park and Ride I-64 West Exit 167 at 8:50 a. m. Suggested carpool fee is \$10.00 per rider. Estimated return time at Oilville is 4:30 p. m.

April 9 (Wednesday) Classic Richmond Neighborhoods RVA (D/4)

Ted McGarry (218-1238). One in a series of two-hour morning hikes by Richmond native and retired City Planner. Coordinator's choice: **Windsor Farms** in Spring flowers. Meet in front of Grace Baptist Church 4200 Dover Rd. Optional lunch in Carytown. Meet at 9:50 AM.

April 11 (Friday) Saunders-Monticello Trail & Jefferson Birthday Celebration - Charlottesville (C/3)

Howard Davis (434-964-1242 or howardsuedavis@juno.com). Explore early spring along the Trails and attend the annual Jefferson Birthday Celebration held on the Monticello lawn. The hike will be about 5-6 miles in total. Hike limited to 12.

April 12-13 or 14 (Sat-Sun or Mon) False Cape State Park – Va. Beach (C-4)

Howard Davis (howardsuedavis@juno.com or 434-964-1242) Backpacking trip to Atlantic Coast south of Virginia Beach. Planned for three days but you could return on Sunday if needed. Will camp at Barbour Hill Bay Side Campground. Saturday hike to Campsite is about 6 miles through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Camping & Park Fees should be around \$15 per person. Hike will be limited to 8 people or 4 tents!

April 12 (Saturday) Carter Taylor Trail (B/3)

Jack Martin (804/678-8083 or rjmartinii@gmail.com) Contact Jack about meet-up location for this 12 miler in the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. Bring a lunch. Meet at 9:30 AM.

April 13 (Sunday - meetup) 5 mile hike in RVA (D/4)

Dave Prestia (389-9099 or david@prestia.us) See web-site for details.

April 16 (Wednesday) Bryan Park – RVA (D/4)

Bill Tennant (282-0590 or willyten10@aol.com). The Friends of Bryan Park are hard at work to rehab this park and the results are beginning to show. Come see what they have accomplished with the Azalea Gardens in the Spring. Let's walk one of Richmond's oldest historic parks for about 5 miles on nature trails, park roads, waterways and across dams. Includes a visit to the nearby Spring Park Historic Site which honors Gabriel's Rebellion. Meet at the parking lot adjacent to Shelter No. 1 on Joseph Bryan Lane. Enter from 4308 Hermitage Rd. at I-95. Meet at 9:50 AM.

April 19 (Saturday) Hawksbill Mountain via AT - SNP (C/3)

Larry Kidd (804-784-3617 or lkiddjr@comcast.net). This is an approximately 8 mile lollipop hike leaving from the SNP milepost 43 parking lot heading south on the AT for 2.5 miles where it intersects with the Hawksbill Gap parking lot and the start of the 2.9-mile circuit hike around and over Hawksbill Mountain as described in PATC's *Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park*. This circuit portion of the trail is made up by the AT, Salamander Trail, and Lower Hawksbill Trail. We will then return north 2.5 miles on the AT back to the starting parking lot. This is a moderate hike with beautiful views much of the way, and a spectacular view at the top of the

highest mountain in the SNP (4051 feet). Bring a lunch which we can hopefully eat on the top of the mountain. Bring National Park pass if available. Call/Contact for meeting time and locations.

April 19 (Saturday) Old Hotel AT Circuit - Cold Mountain (B/2)

David Olli (864-1461 or dolli@smv.org) Starting from the AT crossing on Route 60 get set for some fairly steep up and down trail before reaching the Old Hotel Circuit loop. Hopefully we'll have a clear day to lunch and gaze upon the valleys around us from the bald on Cold Mountain. About 10 or 11 hiking miles; little extra driving but worth the view. Group size limited to 12, no young children or pets please.

April 23 (Wednesday) Pocahontas State Park - Leader's Choice Chesterfield (C/3)

Jeff Samuels (796-7949 or jefflsamuels@yahoo.com). Expect 5-6 miles of easy to moderate terrain. Check the website for hike details to be announced later and there will be two electronic announcements.

April 26 (Saturday) Doyle's River Trail – SNP (C/3)

Bill Tennant (282-0590 or willyten10@aol.com) This is an 8.4 mile hike with a 6.6 mile option. The hike features picturesque waterfalls and an 1800 foot elevation change. It may be necessary to ford streams so be prepared and bring an extra pair of socks.

April 26 (Saturday) Mountain Hike - 10 miles plus (B/3)

David Grimes (dvgrimes.54@gmail.com) Details on web site.

April 26-27 (Sat-Sun) AT: Bears Den Hostel to Harpers Ferry

Howard Davis (howardsuedavis@juno.com or 434-964-1242) Overnight backpack of approximately 20 miles. Hike limited to 8. Possible Friday (25th) option.

April 27 (Sunday- meetup) 5 mile hike in RVA (D/4)

Dave Prestia (389-9099 or david@prestia.us) See details on web-site

May 1 (Thursday) Virginia Historic Garden Week - Homes and Gardens Tour and a Social RVA (D/4)

Ted McGarry and Caroline Meehan (218-1238). West of the University of Richmond off scenic River Road, land developers in the 1930's created Glenbrooke Hills on rolling tree covered land. The homes provide a variety of architectural styles nestled among trees in park-like settings reached by narrow, winding roads. The tour features 5 private homes and gardens, plus an additional garden delight. We will meet at our house and walk over for the tours. Afterward we will break for lunch at our patio and return to the tour if necessary. BRING A LUNCH AS SOFT DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED. Tour tickets are \$35 advance, \$40 day of tour. Call me, as I need an accurate count. <http://www.vagardenweek.org/tours-details.cfm?TourID=128>.

Looking Ahead

May 10 (Saturday) Ramsey's Draft and Fort Johnson Augusta Co. (C/3)

Jim Hunt (hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com or 804-730-2364) and Charlie Huppuch retired forest ranger. This hike includes a guided tour of the civil war Fort Edward Johnson follow by a 6 or 10 mile hike. The 6 mile hike should be easy and the 10 mile is harder and includes stream crossings. Spring is the time of year to see Ramsey's Draft Wilderness. Bring water and lunch and e-mail Jim for details.

Upcoming Activities

March 7 & 8 (Fri–Sat) Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour – James River High School SOLD OUT! Experience adventure on the big screen! Explore the world's last great wild places. The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour will exhilarate and inspire as you journey to exotic locations, paddle the wildest waters, and climb the highest peaks. Different films each night. Films begin at 7:00 but get there early to get a seat. Look for other club members down front. This is always a club favorite and a chance to recruit new club members. Tickets may still be available from Craig's List. Anyone in the club wanting to sell tickets that were purchased but can no longer be used can make them available on the club blog.

March 14 - 16 (Friday-Sunday) Prince William Forest State Park Car Camping

Car camping at Oak Ridge Campground. There is a \$5.00 per car entrance fee and \$20.00 (Sr. Pass; \$10) per night for Camping. Heated Bathroom & Hot Shower available. (2 tents -6 people per site.) Option to camp Sunday night. Possible activities to include visits to DC Mall, Mt. Vernon, ODATC Day Hike at Prince William Forest, and day hike to Great Falls. Contact Howard Davis at howardsuedavis@juno.com or 434-964-1242.

Upcoming Programs Sue Kropp, Contributor

March 18, 2014, (Tuesday, 6:30PM) General Membership Meeting. ODATC member Marilyn Nicol will present *Hiking in Nepal*. The hikes that Marilyn did are fascinating and her photos are breathtaking. The meeting begins at 7PM, but members are encouraged to arrive at 6:30 for socializing and refreshments. Snacks to share are always welcome and we'd also like you to bring a canned good to donate to the church's food bank.

May 20, 2014, ODATC potluck and member slide show. Bring your favorite dish and be prepared to travel the world with your fellow club members. Members are encouraged to submit up to 5 slides of your favorite trip or club related activity prior to the meeting. Meeting time moved up to 6:30 p.m.

September 16, 2014, Jenni Pendergrass will present Hiking on the Dingle Way. We will follow Jenni and several other ODATC members on their trek along the southwest coast of Ireland in May 2012.

November 18, 2014, ODATC members Jane and Lee Hesler are Master Naturalists. They will give a presentation on this program and how it is making an impact on our local environment and natural conservation efforts here in Virginia.

All meetings are held in Bruneing Hall at
Trinity Lutheran Church located at 2315 North Parham Rd. Richmond, Va. 23229.
The meetings officially begin at 7PM, but members are encouraged to arrive 30 minutes
early for socializing. Snacks to share are always welcome. March is the Church's big
food drive. Please bring non-perishable food items to add to their food bank.
For more information contact Sue Kropp at odatc.programs@gmail.com.

40th Appalachian Trail Conservancy Biennial Conference "Hiking Through History" will be held at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA on July 17 -24, 2015. Potomac Appalachian Trail Club is the primary host. Volunteer opportunities are available for leading hikes, presenting workshops, helping on-site during the event, and many more areas that may be of interest. Volunteer forms are available at the ATC Event Page: <http://bit.ly/1dcFhPU> Forms can be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator, Tom Johnson, at volunteers2015@patc.net.

Welcome to New Members

ODATC would like to recognize and welcome the following new members. Current club member are encouraged to welcome and get to know them better as they join us on scheduled hikes listed above.

Janet Bailey
Odelle Robertson, Jr.
Richard & Linda Wahlert

Craig Hardy
Emily Saunders

Ken Murphey
Catherine Sommers

Janet Ress
Sandy Stoddart

2014 ODATC Board of Directors

(Area Code 804)

President	Theresa Duffey	550-0955	odatc.president@gmail.com
Vice President	David Prestia	527-2001	odatc.vicepresident@gmail.com
Secretary	Leonard Atkins	275-1208	odatc.secretary@gmail.com
Treasurer	Dennis Schafer	314-2434	odatc.treasurer@gmail.com
Programs	Sue Kropp	276-0070	odatc.programs@gmail.com
Land Mgmt.	Karl Huber	355-4619	odatc.landmgmt@gmail.com
Membership	John Spindler	746-4717	odatc.membership@gmail.com
Trail Maint.	Lori Ando	397-5306	odatc.trailmaint@gmail.com
Activities	Jim Hunt (weekend events)	730-2364	odatc.activities@gmail.com
	Ted McGarry (weekday events)	218-1238	odatc.activities@gmail.com
Newsletter	Susan Kidd (acting)	784-3617	odatc.newsletter@gmail.com
Outreach	David Grimes	833-8974	odatc.outreach@gmail.com
Webmaster	Larry Kidd	784-3617	odatc.webmaster@gmail.com

Walking in Nature Prescription for Better Health

By Leyla Erk McCurdy

Source: National Environmental Education Foundation



Regular walking can have a tremendous positive impact on overall health and well-being. There are additional benefits in taking these walks in natural environments, such as parks, trails, and other green spaces. Studies have shown that people are more likely to walk and be physically active, as well as enjoy higher levels of health and well-being when they have easily accessible green spaces in their communities.

Walking in nature promotes total health, both physical and mental. An example of this can be seen by looking at the body's relationship with stress after walking through an urban and a green environment. In one study, groups of university students were taken on walks through a forest and the city. Saliva samples taken from the participants before and after each of the walks demonstrated that the experience of walking through the forest reduced the participants' levels of cortisol, the body's stress hormone, to a greater extent than did the city walk.(1) These results were echoed in a study where researchers looked at EEG readings of participants as they walked through a shopping district, a leafy green area, and then a busy commercial site. The brain activity recorded on this walk demonstrated a reduction in tension and stress as the participants entered into the natural area, coupled with increased levels of calm and relaxation.(2) Thus, by intentionally getting exposure to nature during their walk, the participants had lower levels of stress, both physical and mental, than they experienced by walking through more developed areas.

Walking in nature can have additional positive impacts on disposition and memory—researchers have found that students with moderate to severe depression demonstrated a significant increase in both mood and short-term memory after a walk through a natural setting, as compared to a walk through the city.(3) For children with ADHD, a walk through a park, compared to walks of equal length through a neighborhood and an urban setting, had the greatest success in improving the attention span of the children on frustrating tasks.(4) Spending time walking in nature also stimulates mental acuity—individuals who spent time backpacking through the woods without access to technology demonstrated improved ability in creativity and problem solving.(5)

For those looking to start a regular exercise routine, the regimen might be more likely to last if done outdoors: people who are regularly exposed to a natural environment may be more likely to participate in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity, and those who exercised outdoors as opposed to inside on a treadmill reported a greater intent to repeat their routine.

Walking is greatly beneficial for the body and mind. Taking the exercise out into nature augments these benefits, so that getting to better health may be just a walk in the park.

January 3, 2014



Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks

Adventure Series

**Lectures: Henrico County
Administrative Board Room
4301 East Parham Road**

**Mountainfilm:
Henrico Theatre in Highland Springs
305 E. Nine Mile Road**

Information: Dee Donnelly, 501-5147



Laurel Williamson - A Walk Across Virginia
Friday, March 14, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

There is no foot trail that crosses Virginia from west to east, so Laurel Williamson decided to create her own. In 2012, she cobbled together her own route by road, trail, and boat to explore her home state of Virginia from mountain to sea. Although Laurel originally dreamed up this trip for the sake of adventure, it turned into an opportunity to learn more about some of the state's special waterways and meeting other Virginians involved in protecting them. In this presentation, Laurel will share photos and stories of some of those special encounters.

Ken Conger - Asia, Africa & Alaska
Friday, March 21, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Wildlife photographer Ken Conger will present a buffet of spectacular photos captured during his 2013 adventures to Borneo, Sulawesi, India, Kenya, and Alaska. Ken complements his photos with stories, animal facts, audio and short videos. The program provides a view of a wildlife photographer's world and the challenges taken in order to capture stunning wildlife images.



Telluride Mountainfilm on Tour
Friday, March 28, 7-10 p.m.

Each year in Telluride, Colorado, Mountainfilm celebrates cultures unique to mountain communities with an international rendezvous of legendary mountaineers, environmentalists, filmmakers, authors, scientists, and artists. The mission of Mountainfilm is to educate and inspire audiences about issues that matter, cultures worth exploring, and environments worth preserving. Don't miss this opportunity to view incredible outdoor films!

Lest we forget...

The ODATC Mission

- The construction and maintenance of foot trails for hikers, including the trail between Reeds Gap and Rockfish Gap.
- The provision of excursions on such trails or other areas
- Offering educational activities related to the need for preserving the great outdoors.

ODATC and ATC

ODATC is a maintenance club and a member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). Annual dues are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families. Lifetime memberships are available for \$250. Renewals are due annually based upon the month you joined. Renewals and applications for membership can be processed online. If you prefer the USPS, forms for renewal and application may be printed from the website. If you are interested in becoming a member of the ATC you can call (304) 535-6331, ext. 119, e-mail them at membership@appalachiantrail.org or use this link to their website: <http://www.appalachiantrail.org/donate/join-renew>.

THE WALKER

The Walker is published
bi-monthly with the submission deadlines by the
15th of the pre-publication month. Club member stories and
photos are welcome!
Please send your material to odatc.newsletter@gmail.com.