

The Walker

Newsletter of the Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club

Volume 24, Issue 4

September 2016

President's Message

Greetings!

Hard to believe and sad to say - but our ODATC summer break is just about over! While our member meetings skipped July I can tell you that the club has been busy this summer on a number of projects. Here is a quick update on some of the things that have been going on during the "break":

The Rockfish Gap stairs are in – this was a monumental undertaking during some of the summer's hottest weeks in July. Thanks to Konarock and all the ODATC volunteers that came out to help build the 33 stone steps, cribbing, water bars, etc. It will be a real pleasure not to worry about sliding down the trail this winter and next spring! A special mention to Richard Brett and his crew for another summer of fine dining at Konarock camp! The Konarock crew also constructed a number of water control features on the switchbacks down from the Albright Trail to the shelter. We're looking forward to having them back next summer for more fun in the sun!

The website re-design is underway thanks to Sue Kropp's work with the Wild Apricot developer (Web Bright Services). The board has made a first review and comment on the new design and Sue will have met with Web Bright by the time you read this to move the development to the next phase. We're in hopes of presenting the new website at our November membership meeting and show off some of the new features.

Aseeyah Rhinesmith and Jenni Pendergrass are in Shepherdstown, WV attending the ATC Leadership Conference. The conference is focusing on ways to make the clubs more successful in recruiting new members from a wider demographic. We look forward to the ideas and initiatives Aseeyah and Jenni come back with.

Trail maintenance season has been in full swing with great turn outs for the work trips. Although we've been able to get a lot done there is always more to do! If you haven't tried it – come out for one of the fall trips and check out this key club activity and help keep our piece of the AT in the shape we wish all the AT could be! The new privy is next up for special projects and Mark Heede is heading up that effort. Some have dubbed it the "Heede Head" project. Stay tuned for details – it should be an interesting project.

The financial audit was completed thanks to Bill Tennant. Bill found that the club finances were being correctly managed and accounted for by the Treasurer(s) and had a few suggestions for streamlining some of the accounting to make future audits easier. We will be posting the audit with a budget update in the "Members only" section of the new website later this fall.

We purchased our "Damascus" brick for the Community Pathways Project. The final round of bricks is projected to be installed fall or winter 2016. Just another reason to get down to trail days next May!

So enough of what's been happening – now about what's going to be happening:

There are lots of good hikes on the calendar for fall and more will be listed as we move toward the end of the year. There's been a lot of Bear activity on our section of trail so be aware and go prepared! Plan on coming out to the club picnic at Pocahontas State Park - October 23rd – please RSVP to cathymaxwell@me.com ASAP to help the planning volunteers get a “head count”.

It's probably not too early to start thinking about attending the 2017 ATC biennial conference. The conference will be August 4-11 at Colby College – Waterville, ME. Here is the website address for details: <http://www.atc2017.org>. Registration opens in May 2017. Baxter is about 2.5 hours north!

Big changes are happening with the Walker newsletter. With the next publication the Walker will become more of a journal type publication focusing on stories and articles. While club events and news will also be part of the new format, full details and updates on those will be posted on the new website. Because it takes more time and effort to collect, edit and publish stories, articles, etc. the publication schedule for the Walker is also changing. Starting with the next publication the Walker will be published February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. The Walker will be an entirely digital publication (e-Walker - may the force be with you!)

Board elections are coming up for: 1) Trail Maintenance Manager(s) – due to the scope of maintenance activities we would like to have a Manager and Assistant Manager; 2) Webmaster – some or all of the website maintenance would have to be outsourced to a private contractor if there are no club volunteers able to take on this critical task; and 3) Vice President – a big “Thank you” to Theresa Duffey who has agreed to serve as VP for the duration of this year's term. Candidates are needed for these board positions so if you or someone you know is interested in getting involved behind the scenes please contact me or any board member and we will be glad to fill you in on how it all works. Do not be afraid – if I can do it anyone can do it! You'll be glad you volunteered.

In order to broaden the club's financial base, the board is exploring the idea of establishing a club sponsorship opportunity with one or more of the outdoor retailers in the area. The sponsorship agreement would provide space on our website for our sponsor to be recognized and create a link to their website. If any members have experience with creating and managing on-line sponsorship / marketing and are interested in helping us further develop this initiative, please contact me or another board member.

The latest update on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is that it appears to be crossing the AT in the vicinity of Reid's Gap. The primary plan is still to bore through the mountain and Dominion's geology studies suggest the conditions are favorable to do that successfully (does anyone need 27,000 cubic yards of rock?). However if that can't be done then the secondary plan is an open trench cut in the same location. The project is still pending approval by FERC which is still considering comments from the U.S. Forest Service, ATC and other stakeholders. Until FERC decides whether or not to approve the project we are all in a wait and see situation.

Since this was only supposed to be a quick update until the next Walker I'll cut it off there! Lots more to talk about – lots more to get involved with! I look forward to seeing everyone at the September 13 membership meeting – Art Ritter will give a talk on hiking in Oregon.

Happy Trails! *Dave*

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

CARPPOOLING 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/Weekday Hikes



September 7 (Wednesday) New Loop Trail - Pocahontas State Park - Chesterfield (D/3)

Jeff Samuels (jefflsamuels@yahoo.com or 536-2671 c). Part of this shaded, 4.5 mile hike will be on the park's newest hiking only trail, a 0.69 mile loop near the Nature Center. This yet to be named trail is home to one of the park's biggest trees. If interested you may want to consider entering the park's contest to name this new trail.

Hike also includes Beaver Lake Trail and the Conversion Area (a former campground). Restrooms at the beginning. Park entrance is on Beach Road (Rt. 655) 4 miles west of Rt. 10 (Ironbridge Rd). Parking fee without park pass. Meet in the big parking lot near the pool/picnic area at 9:50AM.

September 13 (Tuesday) ODATC's September General Meeting.

The meeting starts at 7:00 but you are welcome to come by 6:30 to have a little social time. Club member, Art Ritter will presents on "A Week Hiking in Oregon." In 2015, Art spent a week in Central Oregon at the Appalachian Mountain Club August Camp. In this

presentation, he will talk about the hikes he went on, as well as life at August Camp. Don't worry, the presentation will take far less than a week!

September 14 (Wednesday) 'Central Park' - RVA (D/4)

Suzanne Hallberg (955-9510) and Jim Metz (615-1949). Maymont is 'Richmond's Central Park' according to an out of state contributor on Trip Advisor. Maymont is #2 of 91 attractions in Richmond, VMFA was first. Enjoy this 4 mile hike around three lakes in Byrd Park, the Vita Course and Maymont, but no time for a visit with the animals. Meet at the Spotswood Rd. parking lot off Boulevard Bridge Drive (opposite Dogwood Dell). Optional lunch at a Carytown eatery. Meet at 9:50 am.

September 21 (Wednesday) Old Ginter Park – RVA (C/4)

Alec Alexander (833-0361 or jrob505@verizon.net). Meet at the open field opposite 3306 Loxley Rd off Brookland Park Blvd. We will walk 5 miles through the original Ginter Park and adjacent neighborhoods. Note: there are no bathroom facilities on this hike. Meet at 9:00 AM.

September 28 (Wednesday)

No one volunteered to coordinate a hike on this date. To schedule one which can be added to the web site and have email notices sent, contact Ted (218-1238 or tedmcgarry@juno.com).

October 5 (Wednesday) Deep Run Park – Henrico (C/4)

Alec Alexander (833-0361 or jrob505@verizon.net). For a 5 mile hike, meet in the parking lot closest to the entrance. Bathrooms are available. Meet at 9:00 AM.

October 12 (Wednesday) Crozier Hike and A Social – Goochland (C-3)

Jack Martin (678-8083 or rjmartiniii@gmail.com). Hike the woodlands of Goochland and stay for lunch (drinks, hamburgers and hot dogs provided). Bring a side dish and RSVP to Jack. Meet at the Oilville Park and Ride (I-64 Exit 167). Early meeting time for a Wednesday hike at 9:30 am.

October 17 (Monday) Buttermilk/Northbank Trails Loop - James River Park - RVA (C/2)

Jim Hunt (hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com or 730-2364). The 8 mile hike traverses Browns Island to the pipeline, crosses the 14th street bridge and connects with the Buttermilk via the Floodwall, recrosses the River on the Boulevard Bridge, connects to the Northbank Trail

ending at the cars. Meet at the free parking lot on Tredegar St. between the Lee Bridge and 2nd St. Bring water and snacks. Meet at 9:30 am.

October 19 (Wednesday) Forest Hill Park – RVA (C/4)

Alec Alexander (833-0361 or jrob505@verizon.net). Meet at the Stone House. We will walk 5 miles around the park, down to the river and return. Portapotty at the river. Meet at 9:50 AM.

October 26 (Wednesday) Pony Pasture - RVA (D/3)

Jim Hunt (hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com or 730-2364). This is our first hike since the Huguenot Bridge reconstruction started in 2011 and a great time to walk 5 miles along the James River fall line when all the leaves are off the trees. At the south end of the Huguenot Bridge, exit onto Riverside Drive. The well-marked Huguenot Flatwater parking area is one quarter mile west of the Bridge. Meet at 9:50 am.

October 27 (Thursday) Old Rag Mountain - SNP (C/1)

Jack Martin (678-8083 or rjmartiniii@gmail.com) Hike #13 in “Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park”. Length is 9.4 miles, elevation change is 2,200 ft. and strenuous enough that you should have previous hiking experience for this type terrain. Bring water and lunch. Meet at the Oilville Park and Ride (I-64 Exit 167) at 8:30 am.

Trips, Treks, and Talks/Weekend Hikes

September 4 (Monday afternoon) Buttermilk Trails - James River Park - RVA (C/2)

Ted Nelson (theodore.nelson@yahoo.com). This is one of a series of Monday afternoon hikes taking advantage of Daylight Savings Time. The 8 mile hike traverses Browns Island to Forest Hill Park. Meet at the free parking lot on Tredegar St. between the Lee Bridge and 2nd St. Bring water and snacks. Meet at 5:00 pm.

September 18 (Sunday) Central Area Hike - Pocahontas State Park - Chesterfield (C/3)

Jeff Samuels (jefflsamuels@yahoo.com or 536-2671 c). About an 8 mile hike, part of which will be on the park's newest hiking only trail, a 0.69 mile loop near the Nature Center. This yet to be named trail is home to one of the park's biggest trees. After the hike consider entering the park's contest to name this new trail (contest ends September 20 - details will be provided on hike day). Hike also includes sections of Ground Pine Path, Old Mill Bicycle, Beaver Lake, and Powhatan Trails. Brief stops include: a cemetery, remnants of a

settler's cabin, new yurts in campground, etc. Bring water and snacks. Option: Bring lunch to eat at picnic area after hike. Restrooms at beginning. Park entrance is on Beach Road (Rt. 655) 4 miles west of Rt. 10 (Ironbridge Rd). Parking fee without park pass. No need to call unless you have questions. Meet in the big parking lot near the pool/picnic area at 8AM.

September 24 (Saturday) South River Falls-SNP (B-3)

Jack Martin (678-8083 or rjmartiniii@gmail.com) 10 mile circuit hike with 1,800 ft. elevation change. This hike features the 3rd largest waterfall, Kites Deadening, an old cemetery and Pocosin mission ruins in Shenandoah National Park. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Oilville Park & Ride (Exit 167 off I-64) at 8:30 am.

October 1 (Saturday) Virginia Capital Trail / Dory Park. (C/4)

Alec Alexander (833-0361 or jrob505@verizon.net). We will hike 8 miles west on the new section of the Virginia Capital Trail. This section goes under I-295 and leaves Rt. 5 and goes in the forest. Meet at the Four Mile Creek Park parking area just east of I-295 on the north side of Route 5 and opposite the Exxon store. Meet at 8:30 AM.

October 8 (Saturday) Torry Ridge (B/2)

Jack Martin (678-8083 or rjmartiniii@gmail.com) Start at White Rock Gap off the Blue Ridge Parkway, pass a waterfall, hike along mountain crests, through Sherando Lake campground (see Hiking Upward for a complete description). Bring lunch and water. Meet at Oilville Park and Ride (Exit 167 off I-64) at 8:30 am.

Backpacking Across Maryland – October 8th (Sunday) – October 13th (Thursday) (B/2)

This is an annual backpacking trip that includes a restaurant visit mid-week. We average about 8 miles a day and complete the entire state of Maryland. We will start at Penn Mar Park and end at Harper's Ferry. Meet at Oilville Park and Ride (Exit 167 off I-64) at 8:00. Contact Aseeyah Rhinesmith – solitude1957@hotmail.com or call (804)382-6186 for details. Shuttle cars and parking fees will be needed. Limited to 8 participants

October 15 (Saturday) Mt Marshall Trail/AT Loop Hike (SNP) (B/2)

Jenni Pendergrass (804-221-3226 or japendergrass@hanovercounty.gov) Starting at Gravel Springs Gap parking area we'll head north to Jenkins Gap on the Bluff Trail/Mt Marshall Trail for approximately 7 miles. From Jenkins Gap we'll connect with the AT and hike south approximately 6 miles back to the parking area for a total distance of about 13 miles. Most of it is an easy grade with the main elevation on the AT section. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Rockville/Manakin Park and Ride off of I-64.

October 22 (Saturday) Stony Man/ Little Stony Man/ Miller's Head Overlook (C/3)

David Grimes (804.833.8974 or dvgrimes.54@gmail.com). Peak of "leaf season" day hike on one of the most scenic circuits in Shenandoah National Park. Hike is about 8 miles and moderately strenuous with two rock slide crossings. Dogs are not permitted on this circuit. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Zion's Crossroads Park and Ride (Exit 136 off I-64 at 8:00 a.m.)

October 23 (Sunday) Powhatan State Park - Powhatan (C/3)

Jim and Meredith Henry (j.m.henry@verizon.net or 804 740-3501). Come out and join us on this 5 mile hike which is moderately difficulty with one long climb and several challenging inclines. From Richmond, go to the interchange of Rt. 288 and Patterson Avenue (Rt. 6) drive west approximately 13 miles, taking a left onto US 522 South, cross the river, and after 1.9 miles look for the Powhatan State Park sign. Turn right onto Rt. 617. From Southside, take US 60 West from Midlothian, then US 522 North to a left turn at Rt. 617. Travel on Rt. 617, 1.4 miles, turn right into the Park, follow the entrance road taking the first left on River Launch Road. Meet in the parking area at its end by the picnic shelter. We will end the hike back at the picnic shelter adjacent to the boat launch. A fee or a park pass is required to enter the park. The ODATC's annual picnic will follow at 3 PM. Please RSVP for the picnic. Meet at 12:50 pm.

October 23 (Sunday) ODATC's Club Picnic

ODATC is having a club picnic for it members and guest at Powhatan State Park in the shelter by the river. The club will provide hamburgers, hotdogs and non alcoholic drinks. Club members are asked to bring a dish. The picnic starts at 3:00 and we eat at 5:00. There may be some hiking first. E-mail Cathy Maxwell at cathymaxwell@me.com if you are coming, please respond with the number of people in your party and if number of non meat eaters. From Richmond, go to the interchange of Rt. 288 and Patterson Avenue (Rt. 6) drive west approximately 13 miles, taking a left onto US 522 South, cross the river, and after 1.9 miles look for the Powhatan State Park sign. Turn right onto Rt. 617. From Southside, take US 60 West from Midlothian, then US 522 North to a left turn at Rt. 617. Travel on Rt. 617, 1.4 miles, turn right into the Park, follow the entrance road taking the first left on River Launch Road. Meet in the parking area at its end by the picnic shelter

October 29 (Saturday) Moorman's River Trail (B/3)

Jim Hunt (hikerjimhunt@hotmail.com or 804-730-2364) This 8 mile hike is described in the PATC's Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park. We start down the easy Moorman's River trail then climb out of the valley on the Turk Branch Trail. After lunch we come back on a pleasant section of the AT. Not too strenuous. A Saturday walk in the woods. Bring National Park pass if available. Contact Jim for meeting time and

location. This hike would be a good start of your weekend follow by the Halloween Hoot at our shelter.

October 29 & 30 (Saturday and Sunday) Halloween Hoot Backpacking Event

Mike Shelor (trailguymike@aol.com) Join Mike and fellow "Old Crusty Minstrels, Sue Kropp and Bob Bendl for another spooky night in the woods. Don't miss this umpteenth celebration of this now classic 2-day event at our Paul Wolfe Shelter. Contact Mike for reservations and details.

happy trails... m....

Update From the National Park Service



We wanted to advise you that the Blue Ridge Parkway has experienced a number of bear incidents this weekend in the Humpback Rocks Picnic Area on the north end of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The picnic area itself has been closed for the past week due to bears approaching visitors looking for food. This afternoon a bear broke into a car at the Dripping Rock Parking area north of Humpback Rocks. In addition, two hikers along the Appalachian Trail near Humpback Rocks saw two bears which refused to leave

the trail. Out of an abundance of caution we would like to implement a trail closure and closure to all camping along the Appalachian Trail between the Paul Wolfe Shelter and Dripping Rock (approximately 9.5 miles). We realize this will be an inconvenience for many hikers using the Appalachian Trail through this area, however, based upon the current bear activity we feel we must err on the side of safety. The National Park Service is in the process of reviewing the alternatives for managing the 2-3 bears we believe responsible for most of the on-going activity.

Tom Davis
Natural Resource Specialist
National Park Service
Blue Ridge Parkway
1670 Blue Ridge Parkway
Floyd, VA 24091

(Editor's Note: This picture was shared by a resident of Chesterfield!)

Upcoming Events

Don't Forget our Annual Pot Luck Dinner!



October 23 (Sunday) ODATC's Club Picnic

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS OF ODATC. Let's celebrate the Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club!!!! Come join us for an ODATC picnic and hiking event. This will be a time to get together with other club members and their guests and talk about hikes you have done and are planning to do (and other mischief the members have gotten themselves into). The date is Sunday October 23, and the place is on the James River at Powhatan State Park, shelter #3. The cost is free. The club will provide hotdogs and hamburgers with all the fixings, plus soft drinks. Members are asked to bring a covered dish of their choice. The festivities start at 3:00 p.m. with some guided hikes in the park, followed by the meal at 5:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Cathy Maxwell (e-mail address: cathymaxwell@me.com). Please tell Cathy the number of people in your party and the number of non-meat eaters in your group.



November 8 General Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Speaker Rex Springston, retired RT-D environment/ecology reporter speaking on one of his favorite topics, **Our Friends the Snakes**.

All general club meetings are now being held on the second Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November at The Virginia Science Museum located at 2500 West Broad Street, Richmond VA 23220-2057. The meetings officially begin at 7:00 PM, but members are encouraged to arrive 30 minutes early for socializing. Snacks to share are always welcome. For more information contact David Olli at odatc.programs@gmail.com.

Welcome!

Welcome to the yoga corner!

Here we will explore yoga as an asana (physical posture) practice in addition to the philosophical aspects of yoga. In this first entry I would like to introduce myself and what my journey into yoga looks like so far. In my next entry I will share with you some of my favorite hikes and some exercises which are geared toward hiking.



I first became aware of yoga at my local gym. For me it started as a stretch out your workout sort of thing. The more I practiced, the more I learned how to breathe, what the postures meant, how they benefitted my internal organs and stimulated my mind. I loved what I was discovering. After finding a yoga studio near my employer, attending classes became a convenient part of my schedule.

Unsure of if I wanted to teach yoga afterwards, I enrolled in a teacher training to deepen my understanding of what was happening to my body, mind and soul through the work I was doing on my mat. Throughout the training my awareness of our universal connection was expanded. Realizing that every thought, word and action carries with it so much impact, I felt called to share this amazing tool, this framework, this way of being, with others.

I graduated my 200 hour teacher training through YogaWorks in February of 2015. The first public class I taught was in Forest Hill Park in September of 2015 for Salamander Salutations, a donation based class hosted by the James River Park System. Since then I have been blessed with an abundance of opportunities to share yoga in the Richmond community. You can currently find me teaching at Humble Haven Yoga located

downtown, Om On Yoga in the Libbie Grove area, Jewish Community Center and The Yoga Dojo in Scott's Addition.

My desire to continue deepening my practice through continued study and diversified experience is strong. In early June 2016 I returned from my first foray into international education by completing my Rocket Yoga 50 hour teacher training led by Steve Pyka of Asta Yoga at Lake Atitlan, Guatemala. The experience was freeing, grounding and transformational.

What is yoga? In his book *Light On Yoga*, B.K.S. Iyengar answers the question with: 'It means a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly'. Your yoga journey, like your life, will be unique. You are the only you there will ever be. You have never been this old and will never again be this young. You are doing the best you can with the information you've learned and experienced up until this moment in time. I'll leave you with this advice from Sri K. Pattabhi Jois: 'Practice and all is coming'.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to share my experience with you and I celebrate your dedicated time and attention. Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Namaste,

Shannon Harrison
shannonharrison.com
shannon@shannonharrison.com



Shannon has a passion for all things movement! Her first yoga class was at age 15 but it was ten years later when she really dove into exploring what the world of yoga has to offer. Having graduated from the YogaWorks 200 hour teacher training in Richmond, Virginia in February 2015 then traveling to Lake Atitlan, Guatemala in May 2016 for her 50 hour Rocket Yoga certification she now enjoys cultivating generosity, playfulness and joy through her classes. Outside of class Shannon enjoys her other active career as a hairstylist, ocean adventures, camping, exploring by the James River or hiking in the Blue Ridge Mountains with friends and her 12 year old son, Liam. One of her hiking highlights this summer was the sunrise summit of Volcano Acatenango in Guatemala!

You can also meet Shannon at the **Science Museum of Virginia** at noon on October 19, 2016 for Lunch Break Science— Shannon Harrison, Lifestyle Generation Specialist at Moore Street Studio - The Yoga Journey.

"I am always doing that which I cannot do- in order that I may learn how to do it." - Pablo Picasso

A Florida Bike Tour

By Emily Kimball

Every spring my son Josh and I sign up for a bicycle tour in Florida. We chose a 7-day tour with Bike Florida this year. It looked promising with routes along the west coast from Arcadia to Sarasota, to Englewood, as well as offering many off-road routes on paved bike paths. We weren't disappointed. We set up our tents at civic centers—usually staying at each location for two nights. Indoor campers could bed down inside the center; shuttles took bikers to their hotels. Shower trucks were at the civic centers, and they never ran out of hot water. We signed up for breakfast and dinners served on site. They were usually hearty and plentiful. Others took shuttles into town to dine and explore. The final meal was in a riverside park in Englewood where we watched sail boats and paddle boarders while drinking wine and feasting on salmon. Evening programs offered details on the next day's ride and speakers on local history of the towns we'd be exploring.



Mileage choices changed each day—the shortest being 32; the longest—100.8! There were a couple of challenging 59.4-mile-days when we were moving between cities. If a cyclist gets tired and can't make it, they can call the sag wagon to be picked up. I took advantage of this option a couple of times as my rented bike seat was extremely uncomfortable. (Lesson learned; when renting a bike always bring your own bike seat.) Rest stops greeted riders about every 10-15 miles with lots of inviting snacks including orange slices, crackers, candy bars, pretzels, bananas, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and plenty of ice cold water and Gatorade.



Beautiful public beaches on the bay graced our route on two days. At Siesta Bay Beach I swam for over an hour. Biking and swimming are such compatible activities. After riding the bike for many miles, it is delightful to stretch ones arms doing the crawl. After one long swim the lifeguard signaled me over to tell me there was a manatee swimming about a yard underneath me. I had no idea! Lying on the hot sand with the cool breeze blowing off the bay proved a pleasant change from pedaling my bike.



On one of the longer days I got a really early start as I was eager to hit the next lovely beach. Unfortunately, I got lost when a local biker pointed me in the wrong way. When I discovered I had traveled seven miles in the wrong direction I was really mad. Now I would never get to the beach in time to swim. When turning around I met two Bike Florida women, Judy and Marcia. As I left they hollered after me, "We have a car parked in Venice and are going to drive to the beach and would be happy to give you a ride." I took

them up on it. As a result I only rode 35 miles that day. They crammed my bike into their already overstuffed van and off we went. Judy and Marcia turned out to be free-spirited women on vacation from their jobs as psychiatric nurses in Ohio. They were camping inside at the civic center and using Bike Florida as a jump-off spot to explore the region—doing their own thing. We had great conversations, and I gave them a copy of my book, *A Cotton Rat For Breakfast*, as they just seemed to be the kind of adventurous women who would enjoy it.

Other high points were biking on the 20-mile Legacy Rail Trail from Venice to Sarasota. Sweet smelling bushes of Japanese jasmine lined the trail, and tall palms waved above. It connected with the Venetian Waterway Trail which followed along the Intercoastals Waterway—where boats cruised, and houses lined the opposite bank. On that same day we explored Casey Key—crossing a high drawbridge to enter. Huge mansions lined the narrow streets that faced the bay, and their private beaches across the road.

Special photo ops were many: capturing the miles of orange groves, encountering a house with four confederate flags waving from the porch, and coming upon two Sandhill Cranes towering behind a sign reading "Sandhill Crane Area," to name a few.

Another exciting experience was following the wild and scenic Myakka River through Myakka State Park nine miles east of Sarasota. This 58- square- mile park is one of the oldest and largest of Florida State Parks. It abounds in bird life. Two eagles flew overhead as I entered the park. Alligators floated in the lakes, and deer ran freely. The park is made up of wetlands, prairies, hammocks, and pinelands. I would love to return and camp there and explore its bike trails, birding trails and many special features.



As you can see Bike Florida offered a wonderful experience for those interested in exploring Florida's beaches, parks, rail trails and Keys.

2016 ODATC Board of Directors

(Area Code 804)

President	David Grimes	833-8974	odatc.president@gmail.com
Vice President	Theresa Duffey		odatc.vicepresident@gmail.com
Secretary	Sue Kropp	276-0070	odatc.secretary@gmail.com
Treasurer	Jack Martin	784-1979	odatc.treasurer@gmail.com
Programs	David Olli	928-8702	dolli@smv.org
Land Mgmt.	Mike Shelor	264-8308	odatc.landmgmt@gmail.com
Membership	John Spindler	746-4717	odatc.membership@gmail.com
Trail Maint.	Mark Heede	364-1658	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	Brooks Godwin	263-6572	odatc.newsletter@gmail.com
Outreach	Aseeyah Rhinesmith	382-6186	odatc.outreach@gmail.com
Webmaster	Larry Kidd	784-3617	odatc.webmaster@gmail.com

Board meetings are typically held the first Tuesday of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Meeting dates are occasionally changed so please contact the president for times and location. All meetings are open to the membership.



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.

THE WALKER

***The Walker* is published quarterly
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.**