Datetripper: 3 dates outside and in close

Murder on House Mountain

FloydFest 2018
NO ONE EVER SAYS,
I’D RATHER BE AT THE OFFICE
BUT EVERYONE LOVES TO SAVE MONEY.

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These ads are from recent issue of Blue Ridge Country.
Daytripper
Virginia Outside and In Close

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Master modernist painter Cy Twombly died in 2011, but his favorite places are visited like holy shrines in Lexington, Virginia.

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The 1846 arson and murder of a family on House Mountain during a snowstorm haunts a peaceful spring hike up this popular trail.

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Balloons Over Rockbridge… Boxerwood Gardens… bird-trails… outdoor dates… white flag over Appomattox… blueberry picking… tubing the Maury… and much more.
With digital technology and social media penetrating our lives more and more, there is a strong counter-push toward appreciation of the outdoors and real physical experiences. People may not be able to quit their jobs or leave home—who wants that?—but they seek a practical, occasional break. If only for a day, they want an escape from mass consumerism, and (no contradiction here!) they’re willing to pay for it.

We find that is especially true here in Western Virginia, a gorgeous area that has attracted or held on to young people and families who appreciate breathtaking mountains, pristine rivers and streams, elite universities and the stewardship of a land that Thomas Jefferson loved. This is the target audience of Daytripper: Virginia outdoors and in close.

Our magazine aims to give our readers insight into things to do in Western Virginia in under a day. Through feature stories and shorter items, the magazine will give readers ideas on places to explore, to eat, and to shop. But as a quarterly magazine, it will also be a thing of beauty in the home and in retail stores for each season. The large tabloid size, artful design and photography, and well-crafted writing will connect readers with experiencing this beautiful and vibrant region in a higher aesthetic frame of mind.

With a modest by-mail subscription cost and nominal cost in select local outlets (to which we will hand-deliver bundles), our target reader will not find price a barrier but will have at least a real “buy-in” to the magazine.

Our mission is to get young adults and their children outside and engaging in all that Western Virginia has to offer. We will be a new medium for advertisers to reach this active and growing audience.

FOLLOW US!

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Five years ago, my colleague Professor Pam Luecke suggested that I invent a spring term course called "The Magazine: Past, Present and Future." I did, and it’s been a great fit.

The magazine you see here in prototype, Daytripper: Virginia Outdoors and In Close, is the fourth (and probably final) product of that course in the journalism and mass communications department at Washington and Lee University.

A great fit. It draws on my own romance with magazine, which goes way back.

The 14 students in this class all came with their own romances with magazines as well. The past, present and future (we hope and believe there’s a good one!) mingled in the four weeks we spent coming up with a title, a focus, a marketing plan, a design and "content" (as Hearst magazine marketing head Jeff Hamill told us, the new word for what used to be called "editorial").

The design and art directing deserves special notice here. In the past, I’ve had one student who knew Adobe InDesign enough to design the class’s magazine alone. Unfortunately souls! Each page can be a project, and the smallest problem can drive you crazy. Our class had a Design Team of four students who were willing to learn InDesign, and share the burden. The local high school yearbook advisor, Brian Hamelman, provided one two-hour lesson, and that seemed to be enough.

On top of that, these four designers proved to be quite creative and risk-taking. Take a bow, Caroline, Johana, Liza and Chase.

Emma and Kelly took on the task of anchoring the magazine with its main feature stories. But some of the lesser items grew into main features as well, thanks to Caroline (who also took photographs for her romp with a dog from the Humane Society in Lynchburg) and Graysen.

Other items pulled the others out into the lovely outdoors of our Valley at the height of spring. Good work, Kaelan (our local girl), Taylor, Madi, Mathilde, Isabel, Ethan and Katie.

These students are not far along in the journalism or strategic communication sequences; some are not going that way at all. They’re all first-years and sophomores. But they came a long way in four weeks, hearing from editors and writers who are laboring hard on local magazines (The Roanoker, Valley Business FRONT, Discover (a Roanoke Times quarterly), Edible Blue Ridge, the W&L magazine). And on big national magazines out of New York (The Knot, New York, America, Columbia Journalism Review, The New Yorker). And we heard by speaker phone from John Huey, the retired editorial director of Time Inc. magazines.

Huey was the one who brought me back South nearly 30 years ago to help him launch a slick regional monthly called Southpoint. To watch Daytripper come together reminded me how much fun – and how intense – it can be to launch a magazine.

Doug Cumming
Residents of the Virginia valleys west of the Blue Ridge should know we sit on some of the most fertile land in the country, prime for the production of fresh and locally grown produce. Eating locally comes with plenty of its own benefits, including supporting growers near home and ensuring quality. However, no dining experience, no matter how local, compares to the opportunity of picking your own produce. Blueberries come in season in late summer and this part of Virginia contains multiple family owned farms in which customers may pick their own blueberries (which we have listed on this page).

Under the warmth of a midafternoon sun, you can enjoy walking through a field of blueberry bushes, filling buckets with fruit grown by your neighbors. It’s a wonderful way to reconnect with nature and indulge all your senses in the beauty of rural Virginia. There really is something poetic about getting up close and personal with the food you eat and getting the opportunity to handle it yourself. Growers only ask that you bring your own containers to transport the blueberries off the farm.

Plus, it’s the perfect place to bring the kids, letting them have fun both on the farm and baking sweet goodies with the fruit you had just picked.

- Chase Isbell
If you are searching for a serene, peaceful spot to spend an afternoon, try Boxerwood Nature Center and Woodland Garden. Barely a mile south of Lexington, the 15-acre preserve boasts walking trails, unique vegetation for the region and lots of wildlife. You will quickly find yourself lost in your senses when walking the trails; hearing birds incessantly chirp to the tune of the woods or smelling the sweet aroma of flowers in the air. Originally the home of Dr. Robert and Betty Munger (where their daughter Sally grew up, later to be famous photographer Sally Mann), the preserve is perfect for a family trip. It has its own play trail for kids to explore, even equipped with a kitchen so kids can make Boxerwood's famous mud pies. Location: 963 Ross Rd, Lexington, VA 24450

-Balloonos over Rockbridge

‘July Fourth’ tradition returns to the Horse Center

If you’re riding a hot air balloon over our gorgeous Virginia Valley on your bucket list? This July 6 and 7 at the Virginia Horse Center outside Lexington, balloonists from Tennessee, South Carolina and other states will bring 14 balloons to offer the unforgettable experience. For $200, you can ride a balloon and admire the breathtaking view.

If you’d rather stay on the ground, the festival offers live music from artists Sara Jane McDonald and the Redhill Band and food, beer, and family fun from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, and 12 noon to 10 p.m. on Saturday.

This is the second year of this event. Before that, balloons lifted off from the Parade Ground of Virginia Military Institute. The local Rotary Club organized the earlier version for 19 years around the Fourth of July holiday. Balloons Over Rockbridge, a local nonprofit, took over the iconic event and expanded it. With between 3,000 and 4,000 attending last year, the event was a huge success. The organization expects an even bigger turnout this year.

The event serves as a major fundraiser for selected local charities. Last year, proceeds went toward the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life of Rockbridge. This year, the organization will forward its profits to Hoofbeats Therapeutic Riding and Meals on Wheels.

For more information, visit balloonosoverrockbridge.com or call (540) 460-1901.

-Ethan Pasquali
Finding fun dates can be difficult, especially in small Virginia towns. When you aren’t 21, bars are out. Bowling alleys are rare and smack of “high school,” and you can go out to dinner only so many times. But open up a nature guide or park map, and you have a wealth of potential dates at your fingertips. The challenge is that nature is too wide-open. You need to pace your dates.

So...

1st date - Sunsets

The classic first outdoor date for young people is watching a beautiful sunset. The Blue Ridge Parkway boasts countless overlooks only a short drive away. There are normally many people sitting by the overlooks around dusk, so the spots are not isolated. It is a perfect opportunity to bring to-go food from town and share a meal together outside of a restaurant.

Blue Ridge Parkway overlooking Buena Vista: Blue Ridge Parkway, Vesuvius, VA 24483, Milepost 45.7

2nd date - Lake Robertson

This location is very suitable for a second date. The walk around the lake takes about 45 minutes and is hilly so it provides different perspectives of the water. There are also picnic tables and a gazebo, so it is a perfect opportunity to bring a cards, spike ball, or other games while enjoying the view.

106 Lake Robertson Dr., Lexington, VA 24450

3rd date - North Mountain

Located near a popular caving site, North Mountain is a longer hike and a little bit more of a commitment. The whole 8 mile trail takes 5 hours, but you can do just part of it to minimize the intensity. It is much more private, and you can easily find a secluded spot to talk and share some nice cheese and crackers.

Rt. 770 and FDR 447
Lexington, VA 24450
Lime Kiln has been long-plagued by the unpredictable Virginia weather. But, the Theatre will no longer have to worry about the erratic weather because they are planning to install a retractable cover in the upcoming year. Spencer McElroy, the Executive Director and Booking Coordinator, has greatly enhanced the reputation of the theatre since joining the staff in 2013. McElroy hopes the cover will draw more people to show year around. The cover will be over the main stage, which will allow audiences to come rain or shine. The theatre has no time for any postponed shows due to bad weather because they have a packed summer line-up including: The Travelin’ McCourys, Acoustic Syndicate, Mandolin Orange, and many more. One of the biggest names coming to the theatre is Bruce Hornsby & The Noisemakers is coming on June 24 and you can purchase tickets on www.limekilntheatre.org.
Whether you go birding with a local club or on your own, here’s a list of some of the best places for bird-watching in the Blue Ridge area, according to Paul Cabe, a Washington and Lee University professor of field ornithology.

-Kaelan McCabe

I. Yankee Horse Ridge Trail
Location: Blue Ridge Parkway at milepost 34.4. Nice waterfalls and an abundance of birds.

Birds to look for: Canada Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, Veery

II. James River Trail
Location: Blue Ridge Parkway at milepost 63.6 on the James River Trail. Offers a short, easy hike with access to a world of birdwatching.

Birds to look for: Cliff Swallow, Baltimore Oriole, Orchard Oriole, Indigo Bunting

III. Indian Rocks Trail
Location: Blue Ridge Parkway at milepost 47.5. The trail offers a moderate yet short adventure with opportunities for rock climbing for adventurous hikers.

Birds to look for: Carolina Chickadee, Downy Woodpecker, Hooded Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler

IV. House Mountain Trails
Location: take U.S. 60 two miles west from Lexington, left on Jacktown Road (641) 2.5 miles, right on Saddle Ridge Road (643) to parking lot. Stunning views of the Shenandoah Valley and—of course—birds.

Birds to look for: Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, Brown-headed cowbird, Cerulean Warbler

V. Peaks of Otter
Location: Blue Ridge Parkway at milepost 86. An abundance of hiking trails, easy and moderate. Down the mountain, Peaks of Otter also has a lodge, a lake, a restaurant, camp sites, etc. A perfect bird-watching daytrip experience for families.

Birds to look for: Stop by the visitor’s center and pick up the “Birds of the Blue Ridge Mountains” brochure, which contains illustrations to help children identify all types of birds.
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These ads are from recent issue of Blue Ridge Country.
Twombly in the Valley

By Emma Derr
An Exploration of Cy Twombly and the Virginia Town he Called Home

Photo Courtesy of Betsy and Lai Lee
I visited the Philadelphia Museum of Art as a junior in high school with my AP Art History class. I was entranced by the classics, excited by Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" and Cezanne's "The Large Bathers." I was never a fan of modern art.

This was why, to my surprise, when I stumbled into a first floor exhibit most certainly modern, I was not repulsed. In fact, I was enthralled. It was Cy Twombly's Fifty Days at Illium, which is a ten-part narrative about the end of the Trojan War.

Millions of others have felt this way when presented with Twombly's large, sprawling renditions of history. It is as if he has created a world where ordinary red, grey and white forms combine with graffiti-like letters to create something far more magical than one could ever hope for from these elements.

Today, some of these admirers, the truly dedicated ones, travel back to where it all began in a sleepy Virginian town cozied in the farmland stretching between Charlottesville and Roanoke.

Twombly grew up in Lexington, Virginia, and according to friends of his, loved the town dearly. As one of the most successful Abstract painters in the world, he would regularly leave his adopted home in Italy to resume a quiet life in his hometown, as an unrecognized, disheveled figure worth many millions.

To walk through the places he frequently ordered breakfast, to see his paint splattered on the leftover drywall of his studio, to view his childhood home, these treasure-hunt experiences all bring euphoria to Twombly art pilgrims.

For these places are sacred shrines for those of us who hope they hold the secrets that give Twombly's work such a powerful hold on us. This is where one can look beyond the surface and discover the man behind the art.

It is in this space where one can experience life and art uniting, creating a window into Twombly's world in which modern art is a vessel to explain and come to terms with history.

Twombly was preoccupied with classical mythology.

Maybe that was what drew me in. Having just read parts of The Odyssey in Latin and finished Caesar's Gallic War, I felt right at home with his work.

Twombly was entranced by Lexington, which is steeped in Civil War history and the resting place to vanquished heroes Lee and Jackson. It was this connection to the mystic nobility of the Southern heroes that sparked Twombly's appeal to the classical world.

His influence escapes the walls of museums that house his work because so much of his artistic, philosophical soul and home-grounding love is deeply ingrained in the Lexington-brick sidewalks.

As a student at Washington and Lee, where his father was Coach Twombly, the artist-to-be was much closer to home than I could have ever imagined.

His artwork is always in the back of my mind. I have viewed his works at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Tate Modern in London. And of course I regularly return to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to visit Fifty Days at Illium and his sculptures and works on paper now exhibited there.

Twombly was born in Stonewall Jackson Hospital – at the time, the very house Jackson lived in when he taught at Virginia Military Institute in the 1850s. Twombly grew up with his older sister on Edmondson Avenue, a few blocks...
They said he was a quiet man who did not like to talk about his art. Some say he was came across as slightly conceited. But why not, if you’re a world renown artist hiding out in little Lexington?

from where I have lived the past two years. His father was a beloved W&L coach and athletic director, and Cy was called such because he inherited his father’s baseball nickname referencing Cy Young, the famed American Major League baseball pitcher.

A friend of Twombly’s, David Keeling, said that Cy Twombly Jr.‘s character was heavily influenced by his father and he wouldn’t have been the man he was without him.

His art education began locally. Twombly studied under Pierre Daura, a Spanish artist who had married a Virginia woman in France and, exiled by World War II, settled in Rockbridge Baths as an art teacher at local colleges.

Twombly graduated from Lexington High School and attended Washington and Lee University for only a year. Since he was, as he’d say himself, a “townie,” he did not always love the university. He moved to New York to study at the Arts Students League.

Later in life, Twombly fell in love with W&L. In 1993, he accepted an honorary doctorate in fine arts from the university.

As an adult, Twombly owned a studio downtown and frequented many local spots. He was known for ordering a specialized breakfast every day from the Lexington Restaurant.

Twombly lived at least half of each year of his life in Italy, but usually came back to Lexington with migratory regularity, it was as if he couldn’t ever really leave the town for good, especially in spring and autumn.

The personal connections Twombly formed during this time in Lexington and the surrounding areas are vast. He was friends with the Lexington local and internationally renowned photographer Sally Mann, who released a tribute to him in 2016 called Remembered Light: Cy Twombly in Lexington.

Mann also wrote about Twombly in her memoir Hold Still. “Our part of the South, remote, beautiful, and painted with the past, allows us such a remove, the distance of another time,” she says in the book.

Twombly never owned a car. His friends said they would spend countless hours driving Twombly around the county. He made these trips most often with his friend Harry Pemberton, a professor of philosophy at Washington and Lee, frequently sitting in easy silence.

They said he was a quiet man who did not like to talk about his art. Some say he was came across as slightly conceited. But why not, if you’re a world renown artist hiding out in little Lexington?

Twombly died in Rome in 2011 at age 83. Pemberton died in Lexington in 2017 at 92. Still, some friends and colleagues are around, keeping his memory alive. David Keeling, also an alum of W&L and friend of Twombly’s, was gracious to show me all of Twombly’s favorite local places.

It’s a walking tour you can do in less than a day. The Guggenheim in New York and the Hirshhorn in Washington can wait.
Cy Twombly Pilgrimage in Lexington, Virginia

1. Childhood Home

Twombly grew up with his older sister and parents in a brick and shingled Dutch Colonial at 12 Edmondson Avenue. His parents were from New England, so he often traveled to Massachusetts and Maine. He was a talented painter as a child, working on art kits he ordered from the Sears, Roebuck catalog. Twombly was encouraged by his family to follow his passions. When he was a boy, he told his mother that one day he would live in Rome.

2. Bookery

Cy Twombly loved to read. In his latter years in Lexington, his closest friends were W&L professors who would discuss history and philosophy. Twombly bought many of his books from the Lexington Bookery Limited at 107 W Nelson Street, which was next to his studio. After he died, his house was found packed with novels and textbooks.

3. Lexington Restaurant

Cy was known to frequent the Lexington Restaurant at 810 S Main Street for breakfast in the morning. He was known to order the "Cy Twombly Special," which included poached eggs, grits, and an English muffin. If you visit the restaurant, they still serve this item as an off-menu item.
5. Palms Restaurant

A few doors down from his studio sits the Palms Restaurant, a Lexington dining establishment. Twombly would often go there for lunch and sit at the bar. He was a recluse man, but his friends say he knew many people and would interact with other townies.

6. Adult Home

When he returned to Lexington in 1993, Twombly bought a home at 207 Barclay Lane. David Keeling said Twombly explained his return by saying, "I am coming home to die." It is here where he spent his last years painting and sculpting.
Walking through some Southern towns, you would never guess that the South lost the Civil War. Confederate flags fly proudly in the wind and memorials to the soldiers and the generals hold a place of honor. Not so at Appomattox, Virginia.

Appomattox, after all, is where the war was lost, where General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant, and where the path the country would take was decided. Appomattox Court House National Historical Park is, in a sense, the birthplace of America’s second chance. Rather than focusing on the narrative of glorious battles and heartbreaking defeats, there is an emphasis on microhistories and stories of individuals. A staff member, speaking in character and dressed in period clothing, tells someone’s story in first person. One of these is Ocie Mason, the stepdaughter of Wilmer McLean, the man whose parlor was used for the signing that ended the war. (Oddly enough, the first battle in 1861 was fought around his house in Manassas.) Ocie Mason gives a perspective on the end of the Civil War unlike anything you’ll hear from a battle reenactor. It’s her truth, not that of the Lost Cause.
Murder on House Mountain
By Kelly Fennessy
We hiked up to the saddle of House Mountain on a beautiful Friday spring afternoon. The temperature was pleasantly warm, and the trees provided ample shade to keep us cool. During our entire journey, there was the sound of birds chirping and the crunch of last fall’s leaves below our feet.

You think you’re getting back to the way Mother Nature covered this part of Virginia in the old days, before cars and TV and cell towers. But in fact, the backwoods of the 18th and 19th centuries here were places of hardscrabble human survival. I was just learning about the mass murder that occurred here in the House Mountain saddle when we made our easy hike.

The climb was never too steep, and never too rocky, and when we looked out past the trees we could see spectacular views of the Blue Ridge mountains in the distance. It was an easy day hike, and once we got to the saddle, we still had enough energy to explore. There were multiple campfire pits set up, as many people sleep up in the saddle, along with a mini shelter, and even an outhouse with a red roof.

The information signs gave us a brief history and description of the saddle and the two mountains, Little House Mountain and Big House Mountain. They also told us about the heritage apple orchard in the saddle, which we assumed were the trees just in bloom, and that there was a spring nearby. The whole place was full of budding nature, but there seemed to be something off about such a placid setting and the legend.

We were the only ones up in the saddle, and despite it being the middle of the afternoon, there was a sense of unusual stillness around us. The trees seemed to droop, as if watching us, and the birds seemed to squawk in warning. The farther we walked into the space, the wilder it appeared.

Reveling in the loveliness of the hike and of the saddle, it was hard to imagine that in this very place, families once fought, and even killed one another.

Frozen half naked in snow

The famous House Mountain murder occurred on December 16, 1846. It was a cold winter night and the Pettigrew family’s house was surrounded in 15-18 inches of snow from a harsh blizzard. It was -10°F Fahrenheit with extremely high winds and the closest neighbors were 400 yards away. There was not a soul around to help when their house was burned to the ground.

John Pettigrew came home on Sunday from working at the whiskey mill—“as was his habit”—to find his family scattered dead in his yard and his entire home gone. Of his six children, five of them were strewn about half dressed and frozen. Thankfully, one of his daughters was not home that week, tending to her ill grandmother, and thus was the sole kin survivor, as John Pettigrew passed away shortly after. According to trial testimony, the bodies were about 15 feet from the area where the house once stood, with Mrs. Pettigrew’s half-dressed body in a sitting position and her youngest son huddled in her lap.

One daughter laid alone in the snow, with her leg jammed through a chair, while her two sisters faced each other sideways on the ground and another daughter sat alone with her partially dressed body against a log. Scattered among the dead family were bits of furniture, such as bed clothes, and two beds about 100 yards away. The bodies had been dead for so long that they were turning yellow and were covered in dust and ash. Medical records indicated that the mother and possibly one of the older daughters were beaten before freezing to death. There was a gash on Mrs. Pettigrew’s forehead, in addition to more scratches around her head and face, and marks on her neck from being strangled. One of the daughters had similar bruises on her neck.

A feud of the cows

Old court records and newspaper clippings recount this chilling story with great detail. One newspaper clipping describes John Pettigrew as a respectable
man with integrity. Other sources say that it was a mysterious murder that held much interest among older citizens. Doug Harwood, editor of The Rockbridge Advocate, told me the facts he had learned when writing about the murder himself in 1998. In his opinion, the story is the "best legend that there is around House Mountain."

Researching the murder, he said, was like falling down a rabbit hole, looking into old records and traveling all the way to Bath County, where the court trial took place. It was spooky and haunting, he said. His story in the Advocate was received so well that he had to print extra copies, and he even gave a talk about the murder.

Judging from the source material available, the Pettigrews were most likely murdered by their neighbor, James Anderson, who lived a quartermile away. Newspapers described him as a man of bad character as well as a thief and according to court records, the two families were not very friendly and had quarreled before.

The summer before the murder, Anderson got in a physical fight with another man, in which Pettigrew interfered. As a result, Anderson threw him down, choked him, and was lifting his hand in the air to hit him when witnesses caught his arm. Following this interaction, a few months later, the Anderson's cows roamed into the Pettigrew's cornfield and started destroying it. The Pettigrews had a second house on their property, the old Pettigrew house, and used it to lock the cows up and confine them. Witnesses reported that the Andersons were very angry about their cows, and when going to retrieve them, Mrs. Anderson threatened Mrs. Pettigrew. Later, in October, the old Pettigrew house burned down. When discussing it with a witness, James Anderson was reported to have said "you'll see in a short time, the other house will go in the same way."

After the murder, James Anderson moved to Craig County, where four years later a letter was sent from Rockbridge County stating that he was suspect of murder. He was arrested shortly after and jailed in Lexington. The court case was moved to Bath County so that he could have an unbiased jury and in April 1851 he was found guilty of first degree murder.

His wife was tried also, but was found not guilty, though many had witnessed her threatening the Pettigrew's lives, and others, on multiple occasions. Shortly before the murder, Anderson had asked around about the Pettigrew's money situation, as they were known to have plenty, and this may have been a motive, as many of the Pettigrews belongings, a coverslid, two pillow cases, and a table cloth, were also found in Anderson's home.

**A haunting history**

After exploring the saddle—keenly aware that we could be walking in the footsteps of a mass murder—the trek back down House Mountain felt a bit rockier and a tad steeper. We fumbled on loose stones and footings, and the views outward over the edges of the trail were terrifyingly sublime rather than beautifully breathtaking.

The legend of the House Mountain murder still rests with locals today, who admire its splendor and are fascinated with its history. To us, this day trip was a quick and easy afternoon hike up a gorgeous mountain, but to many people years ago, it was another part of their difficult and hard lives, and possibly a trail associated with traitors and danger.

House Mountain is a stunning landmark in the Rockbridge area. Its two humps seem to flatten along the same horizontal line, confusing the two mountains as one from various views of it below. Ten miles west of the Blue Ridge, it is not quite as far west as the washboard Alleghenies, a stand-alone that geologists calls a monadnock. Hundreds of old etchings and iconic photographs of the area feature House Mountain in the background, as if it were Nature's blessing over the towns below. But it is also rich with its own haunting history.
FLOYDFEST 2018

A "Wild" Time at a Popular Mix of Music and Camping

by Graysen Doran
FLOYD, VIRGINIA.

Home to many things, from an alpaca farm to a host of wineries and distilleries. Yet when many hear the town's name, one thing comes to mind.

FLOYDFEST

Since 2002, a stretch of 80 acres right off of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Floyd has been transformed yearly from Virginian greenery to a campground for this renowned music festival.

Summer and summer, this festival has established itself in the music festival industry as being able to merge live music, craft beer, and outdoor adventure. It has grown from a small personal investment by founder Kris Hodges 16 years ago to a widely attended five-day festival.

FloydFest has always chosen a theme to shape its aesthetic, such as "Freedom" or "Dreamweavin". This year is no different. FloydFest 2018 is going to make you howl and stomp your feet with its "Wild" theme!

There are plenty of opportunities to get wild, thanks to the outdoor adventures unique to FloydFest. During the day, you can hike the Moonstomper Trail, which connects to other trails on the Blue Ridge Parkway, or play disc golf on the course next to the festival grounds. You can also explore the unique artistic installations that artists create to reflect each year's theme.

One popular outdoor adventure at FloydFest is the Daily Float Trip on the Little River. You can explore the river by kayak, canoe, or tube. Trips begin at 10 a.m. and lunch is provided. Due to the river trip's popularity, make sure to plan ahead as it may sell out.

The festival is also perfect for kids of all sizes. With a stage dedicated to your young concertgoers (the Forever Young Stage) to a child-friendly jungle gym and sandbox, kids will be busy day in and day out. According to FloydFest Music CEO Sam Calhoun, kids roam free on the grounds because of the sense of trust and faith established by the concertgoers.

FloydFest is well known outside of southern Virginia because of the thought put into each year's lineup.
There is no way to categorize the type of music at FloydFest because there is not just one! The festival's performers range from afro-pop to folk to gospel-blues, making it an eclectic experience for any attendee. This year, there are big-name acts that will draw you stage-side, such as Foster the People and Old Crow Medicine Show.

But there are a few musical groups that have especially stood out to Calhoun, FloydFest's music maestro. Here are three he says you cannot miss:

**ANTIBALAS**

An afro beat/pop music group that hails from Brooklyn, New York. The 12-person group released its debut record in 2001 and has continued to grow in popularity ever since. Antibalas (“bulletproof” in Spanish) has appeared on both Late Night with Jimmy Fallon and Jimmy Kimmel Live in recent years.

**GRETA VAN FLEET**

A Michigan band, inspired by the classical rock greats such as Led Zeppelin, is another dimension of the lineup. The four young men of Greta Van Fleet recently received a shout-out in Rolling Stone for their 1970s-inspired sound. The group will perform at FloydFest following a nearly month-long tour in Europe.

**LUKAS NELSON & THE PROMISE OF THE REAL**

A group that is led by Willie Nelson's own son is a force to be reckoned with. The younger Nelson has “talent in his own right,” Calhoun said. The group, formed in 2007, has continued to consolidate its following and was guided by Neil Young in its infancy.

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**SATURDAY**

**JULY 28**

**JASON ISBELL & THE 400 UNIT**

**SUNDAY**

**JULY 29**

**OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW**
Dinwiddie, a two-year-old shelter pup, pants and wags his tail, excited to be on a hike in Lynchburg, VA, with staff contributor Caroline Grace.
You’ve Got A Friend In Me

How to Cure Loneliness In Shelter Dogs and In You

by Caroline Grace
Lonesome? Most Americans are. But I’ve found a cure. In Hawaii, Utah, Colorado and the greater D.C. area, animal shelters have begun implementing programs that let you check out shelter dogs like library books. Lonely without my two pups at home (and secretly hoping I could perhaps send Mom enough photos of a dog that she would have to agree to adopt him), I desperately wanted to try it. The Lynchburg Humane Society agreed to lend me Dinwiddie, a two-year-old shelter pup named after Dinwiddie County where he was once rescued.

At 8 a.m. on a Friday, I drove with a photographer friend through mountains carpeted with trees to get to Lynchburg. There, I met with the Volunteer Program director, Karly Lauderdale-Stansfield, a young bubbly woman, who (as part of a 15-minute volunteer crash course) told me about some of the most important pieces of the no-kill shelter’s mission: play, smile and say yes, and glitter. Huh? I said. Well, she explained, play because an unexercised dog is cranky and lonely. Smile and say yes to foster a culture of sharing care and time. And glitter because it’s extraordinary, it sparkles, makes an impact, and sticks around longer than intended—just like my day with Dinwiddie would stick around with me and I hope with him.

After the training, Karly walked me into the kennel, where we paraded down a hallway of clean cages to a deafening cacophony of excited barking. Dinwiddie was in the last kennel, and he almost grinned as soon as we walked up to him, wagging his white tail furiously. Karly slipped a halter on him, handed me the leash, and suddenly, I was being yanked out the door! Do dogs know when they are being saved, even if it is just for a day? The way Dinwiddie raced outside, I think yes.

So Dinwiddie, my friend and I drove with poop bags and
Finally, we turned back, and I watched his white tail shivering with joy between the long grasses, his nose deep in this world that was alive with a constant gorgeous simmering of smells. He smiled, I smiled, and the trees waved us past. Both drenched in sweat, we turned back to the car, allowing the air-conditioning to run as we bee-lined to the water fountain.

He licked my cheek all the way back to the shelter, until my cheek glittered with drool. When we got to his kennel, he slowly padded inside and I steeled my heart because I knew I had to leave him behind there. I slipped his halter off and shut his kennel door. He looked up at me.

His one black-patched eye stared deep into mine, a thank you and a goodbye. But even after I had signed him back into the Lynchburg Humane Society, Dinwiddie was not out of my life for good. His white fur still floats all over my backseat as a reminder of him, his own glitter to this day of play smiling and saying yes.
Floating alongside the towering palisades of limestone in a blow up, Walmart inner tube is a great way to squander a spring afternoon on the Maury River.

The most popular location to drop into the river is the left bank just on the downriver side of the bridge on Farris Mill Road (Route 631), which is only two and a half, short miles off Lee Highway (Route 11) to the northwest. Most tubers will float down till Jordan’s Point, just before the dam.

This trip typically lasts between two and three hours, but if it recently rained, the current can speed up the adventure. Two cars are needed, one at the drop-in and another downriver to greet tubers after their relaxing float.

Tubing down the Maury is not only a great way to cool off on steamy days, but also have what might be called “forced family fun time” outside.

Recently, many lazy floaters are in distress over the news that Jordan’s Point Dam is being demolished because of fears the river level will drop too low to float, kayak, or swim.

The dam, which crosses the Lexington city line through the Maury River, has been in place for over 100 years but is now falling apart. The reconstruction would cost Lexington and Rockbridge County millions of dollars, so when the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) offered to pay for the removal, it was a no brainer for the Lexington City Council to demolish the dam.

But fear not– the Maury is not the only river to float; many sporting goods companies, such as Natural Bridge’s Wilderness Canoe Co., provide tubing trips down the James River.

If the James is not your cup of tea, the New River Junction rents tubes on the New River in Blacksburg and River Riders can provide floaters their tubes on the Shenandoah River in Harpers Ferry.

Wilderness Canoe Co. provides tubes and also buses participants to the companies’ own private drop in location on the James River. It takes between three and a half to five hours.

But if lounging in a tube for hours does not appeal to you, Wilderness Canoe Co. also provides kayaking and canoe trips on the James River.

The owner of the company, Charlie Pickle, said the Alpine WCC route was the most popular to kayak or canoe. It is nine and a half miles with some sections having rapids, but Pickle said all experience levels enjoy the trip.

Wilderness Canoe Co. also provides trips to paddle balcony falls, which include class three rapids. Pickle described how adventurers travel from all over to paddle these rapids on the upper James River.

Photo courtesy of Mary Virginia Spencer

By Liza Moore
Biking the Blue Ridge Parkway

The Blue Ridge Parkway, as one of America’s prettiest and most placid highways, is naturally popular with bicyclists. But if you’re on a bike, it is also one of the most dangerous. The winding two-lane road sees many cycling accidents each year, on average 294 over the past three years. There are no bike lanes or road shoulders. Luckily, law enforcement officers have recognized the danger. Parkway officers are increasing the number of officers on patrol and the number of checkpoints.

Additionally, cars are now required to drive in the left lane to avoid them completely and may not follow even hill-slowed cyclists by more than four feet. Unfortunately, many are unaware of these new rules, so here are some safety tips for you to avoid crashes and ensure a fun and scenic cycling experience!

- Avoid tunnels. Most car-bike accidents on the Parkway occur in tunnels
- Ride with traffic
- Ride to the far right side of the road
- Ride in single file
- Ride in small groups
- Make sure to have lights on the front and back of your bicycle (make sure the light is visible for a distance of 300 feet)
- Cycle at a safe speed. (Most accidents occur because of fast bicycle pace and distractions)
- Be careful when cycling in the rain, especially when there are wet leaves involved
- Wear a helmet
- Plan your biking trip for less busy times on the parkway (November-April)

By Katie Popp
Few know about Henry's Cabin. I had not learned about it until my senior year at Washington and Lee University, but was intrigued when I caught word of the small cabin in the woods at the back of campus. It was apparently started by a student before my time. The story goes that a senior English major named Henry was particularly inspired by Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. To recreate a place for students to experience a similar retreat into nature, his senior thesis involved building a cabin approximately the size and roughness of Thoreau's in Concord, Massachusetts. Today, students can sign up to spend a night for free in the cabin if they agree to a series of rules meant to encourage students to commune with their surroundings. The rules include no electronics, only one person in the cabin at a time, and no alcohol use during your time in the cabin. Earlier this year, I signed up for a night and got the chance to spend a frigid November evening overnight in Henry's Cabin.

For my generation, individuals tend to use the outdoors to connect with others. Students at W&L hike House Mountain with a group of friends or sign up for an Outing Club trip to bond over a novel, exciting outdoor excursion with peers. Henry's Cabin flips this on its head. Taking an evening to be introspective makes the walk to the cabin feel different from other trips to back campus that I have taken. There is not a clear trail to the cabin, which adds to the feeling of wilderness and solitude despite being no more than several hundred feet from the path. I wanted to get to the cabin with enough time to be able to spend some time outside in the light before the cold forced me inside the cabin. I got the chance to sit on the porch and enjoy sun setting on the woods before it began to get dark and chilly, at which point I stepped into the cabin to investigate the room.

The cabin is minimalist—inside there is a desk, a cot, and not much else. I took a moment to take in the surroundings and several moments to try and remove as many cobwebs and insects as possible. Knowing the temperatures were supposed to get below freezing that night, I had brought ample blankets and a cold weather sleeping bag, and I laid them out on the cot careful not to get them too dusty. This night in Henry's Cabin remains the only time I have ever checked out books from Leyburn Library for leisure and not just for class. I picked up Thoreau's *Walden* as well as several poetry books by Robert Frost, thinking they would make for compelling reading for this experience. Interestingly, the first poem I read did the best job encapsulating Henry's Cabin. "Into My Own" by Robert Frost describes how the woods call him to leave behind his daily life and venture into the wilderness. The sonnet ends with Frost proclaiming that if any of his friends were to chase after him into the wilderness, "They would not find me changed from him they knew—Only more sure of all I thought was true."

So it was with me. After taking a night away from electronics and other people, I cannot say I felt like I was fundamentally different as a result of the experience. However, it affirmed my love for the outdoors and for seeking new experiences. I highly recommend that others, with or without a love for the outdoors, take the time to be introspective about the things they are passionate about, and take the time to unplug and refresh. Henry's Cabin was a fantastic way to do that, and as technology plays a larger and larger role in our everyday lives, I hope students continue to utilize the cabin for years to come.
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