

Are you ready for another day at Springwood?

Springwood, VA, Revisited

CSX Railway's Milepost 202 is just below us as we balance atop the Springwood rock-look-out above Little Tunnel. The tracks curve away into the dense tree line. Ah, but we aren't here solely to watch for trains today; earlier we dropped off Jim's friend, Chris, and his kayak upriver.



Chris is paddling down the James River toward us. I look out over the mountain-rimmed bowl of neatly-fenced squares of farmland.



A bountiful crop of hay has been transformed into huge round bales and the farmer and his helper are busy loading their green-brown gold onto a flatbed trailer, pulled by a trusty-rusty red pickup truck. Each of these bales averages about 1,000 pounds. How do they load these things on the trailer? Certainly, not by hand! The farmer is using a John Deere tractor, fitted with bale forks. They head for home with their round-wrapped treasures but there are plenty left to dot the lush, green field for our viewing pleasure.

Stately dark-green trees cast their morning shadows toward each other. Under one very large one, its pool of cool is filled with dozing cattle. Jewel-toned butterflies flit through nearby bushes.

Wind-fluffed jet contrails slice across the clear blue sky. Four hawks are gliding in big circles on thermals. Several clover bushes have clawed their way between the rocks on this look-out and are decked with dainty, white blossoms. I've never had the time in years past to just SIT and admire the delicate beauty of those flowers. But the bees know all about them and are busily hauling away nectar. I can feel the peace of this place drift down over me and it seeps into my very being.



Ooops! A crow is cawing his displeasure of our presence. Too bad, Heckle and Jeckle, we are here for a while!

From our perch “miles” above the river, the scenery below us looks like an animated post card.



Oh, oh, a coal train is coming and Chris is paddling like mad to get to the bridge the same time as the train for photographic enhancement. (We keep up with his progress on cell phones. He reports that he has caught several fish.)

Chris hoots as he rounds the curve of the river, his voice echoing off the cliffs beside him.

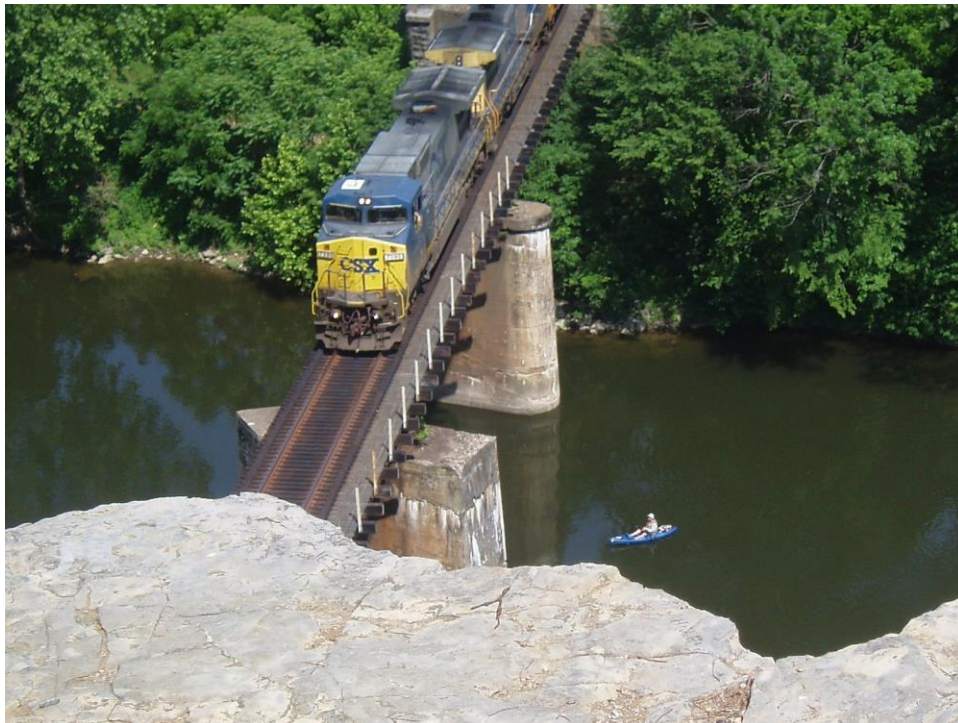


The farmer hauls off another load of bales and the train is only a couple of miles away so excitement is building.

Chris gets into position and the crew is still complaining.



We hear the train approaching. The “chariot of iron” whistles its greeting to us, then roars through the tunnel under us as the rocks tremble beneath our feet. This is NO time for a rock slide!



Jim gets a couple of good pictures but he and Chris want to come back another day for another try.

Hey, anytime a day at Springwood is planned, I'm ready.

Lumpy, gray-blue, distant mountains watch over their empire and add to the beauty of this hallowed spot. I think God formed this place just so people can come here and recharge their mental batteries. And the James River just keeps flowing into the future, carrying with it ripples of sunlight diamonds and rainbow-prisms of dancing life.



I am so very blessed!