

# TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

WINTER 2002

*The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is a recreational hiking association of volunteers who preserve and improve the Appalachian Trail as the nation's premier, continuous, long-distance footpath.*

## In Memoriam

### Eric Miller

### 1947-2001

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TRAIL BLAZER

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club  
PO BOX 12282  
ROANOKE VA 24024-2282

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**CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES**

**WORK HIKES**

**Sunday, January 13 - 8:00 AM**  
**Brushy Mountain, Bland Co.**

**Sunday, February 17 - 8:30 AM**  
**Pickle Branch Shelter**

**Sunday, March 17 - 8:30 AM**  
**Catawba Mountain**

**Hike Scheduling**  
**Monday, February 11 - 7:00 PM**  
**Hosted by *Suzanne Barnett***

**Annual Banquet Meeting**  
**Saturday, March 9 - 7:00 PM**  
**Christ Lutheran Church**

**BOARD MEETINGS**  
**(All members are always welcome. Please**  
**let the host know you plan to attend.)**

**Thursday, January 17, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Hosted by *Suzanne Barnett***

**Thursday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Hosted by *Bob & Kris Peckman***

**Thursday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Hosted by *Jim & Linda Hutchings***

## Hike Schedule

**Guests** Visitors are always welcome. Come dressed for hiking. You are expected to follow the directions of the hike leaders.

**Transportation** You may drive your own car if you wish; however, the hike leader is responsible for arranging transportation and all will follow his/her directions. The carpool fee to help defray car expenses is noted on the schedule and should be given to the driver.

**Meeting Place** The point of departure is at the discretion of the hike leader, so always check with the leader when planning to attend.

**Sunday, January 6, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Black Horse Gap to Bearwallow Gap (AT)**

7 Miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee  
Kenny Garrett 890-8946, Laura Montague 725-3682

**Sunday, January 6, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Apple Orchard Falls from Sunset Field**

3 miles, moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Bobbie Stitche 890-2140, Linda Akers 776-1969

**Sunday, January 13, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Brushy Mountain, Bland Co. Workhike**

\$3.50 carpool fee, Charles Parry 540-951-1402  
Kenny Garrett 890-8946, Suzanne Osborne 982-2936

**Sunday, January 13, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Reed Mountain**

5 miles, moderate  
Ron Crawford 977-4540, Jim Law 721-8964

**Sunday, January 20, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Price Mountain**

13 miles, Strenous, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Dave Wickersham 982-1420 or DLWick@ATT.net  
Rusty & Laura Schundler 344-4745

**Sunday, January 20, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Harveys Knob to Bobblett's Gap**

3 miles, easy, \$2.50 carpool fee  
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273, Jean Warren 384-6229

**Saturday Night, January 26, 2002 - 6:00 PM  
Moonlight Hike for Daleville to RT. 652(AT)**

3 miles, easy, no carpool fee  
Zetta Campbell 366-8165, Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

**Sunday, January 27, 2002 - 8:30 AM  
Rt. 624 - Dragons Tooth - Trout Creek Rt. 620**

7 miles, moderate, \$2.50 carpool fee  
Kris Peckman 366-7780, Dave Sutton 774-0648

**Sunday, February 3, 2002 - 9:30 AM  
Cove Branch-Potts Arm Loop**

7 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee  
Suzanne Osborne 982-2936, Terri McClure 375-2650

**Sunday, February 3, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Roanoke Mountain Loop**

4 miles, easy, \$1.50 carpool fee  
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273, Dave Sutton 774-0648

**Sunday, February 10, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Ribble Trail-AT Loop**

10 miles, mod/strenuous, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Kenny Garrett 890-8946,  
Rusty & Laura Schundler 344-4745

**Sunday, February 10, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Cascades**

4 miles, easy, \$3.00 + park entrance fee  
Linda Akers 776-1969, Jean Warren 384-6229

**Sunday, February 17, 2002 - 8:30 a.m  
Pickle Branch Shelter Workhike**

\$2.00 carpool fee  
Charles Parry 540-951-1402  
Bob & Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Sunday, February 17, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Daleville to Hay Rock (AT)**

7 miles, moderate, no carpool fee  
Lucien Metayer 344-1877, Mervin Brower 387-9732

**Sunday, February 24, 2002 - 9:30 AM  
McAfee's Knob (AT)**

7 miles, moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee  
Bobbie Stitche 890-2140, Dick Clark 989-7053

**Sunday, February 24, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Hoop Hole Lower Loop**

4 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee  
Gene Downs 473-2326, Suzanne Osborne 982-2936

## Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Gary Adams

Joseph Alhadeff

Michael Bassett

Ken Snyder

Paul Blaiklock

Pamela Corcoran

Carol Davit

and Pat, Chuck, Alissa, Keith, and Kevin Gadpaille

Mike Leahy

Susan Rilee

John Short

We look forward to meeting you soon, hiking on the trail, at a workhike, at the Christmas party in December or the annual meeting in March. You are welcome to attend board meetings. Just call the host ahead of time so he/she can set out enough chairs and have an estimate for refreshment time.

*Liz Lamson*

Your dues are due January 1<sup>st</sup>. Please use the form on page 11 and update you email address etc.

## President's Message

The dedication of the Sarver Hollow Shelter on October 20 was marred to some extent by the presence of a freshly clear-cut area between the shelter and the spring. It appears that a member of our club had asked the Forest Service for permission to level the approximately half-acre tract. And, although his request was denied, he went ahead and did it anyway.

The species of tree involved is known as Ailanthus or Tree of Heaven. It is an invasive species and, quite frankly, not a particularly attractive tree. But clear-cutting, in addition to creating an eyesore, is not an effective means of eradication. On the contrary -- it can actually exacerbate the problem.

This incident reminded me of a chronic problem that the Natural Bridge ATC had to deal with a number of years ago. A well-meaning individual who was not a member of their club (or any other maintaining club so far as we know) decided to adopt the Bobblets Gap Shelter.

At first, he simply made sure that the shelter was well supplied with books and magazines -- no problem here. But then he installed school desks and constructed a sequence of nature trails leading out from the shelter. This *was* a problem, and it continued to be a problem for many months until the unauthorized activities finally ceased.

The point is that, in each case, the individual involved had good intentions but the modus operandi was wrong.

As many of you know, neither the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club nor any of the other AT-maintaining clubs operates in a vacuum. We are partners with a number of agencies -- notably the Appalachian Trail Conference, the Appalachian Trail Park Office, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Every Appalachian Trail project must be approved at some level. Some simple projects can be okayed by our club Board, but most need approval from one or more of our partners. And, yes, this does involve some bureaucracy -- many projects require an extensive NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) review, for example.

Certainly, you are encouraged to pick up trash or remove small blow-downs that you may run across on the Trail. But, beyond that, be careful. Some of you may not be aware that you are not allowed to use a chainsaw on the Trail unless you have completed an approved chainsaw certification course.

If you want to help with Trail projects or maintenance, I will guarantee that we can find as much work for you as you want. If you have an idea for an improvement to the Trail, you are encouraged to bring it to our attention. Co-operation is the key to preserving the Appalachian Trail and making it even better.

*Dick Clark*

## Trail Supervisor's Report

Each year we give service awards of RATC hats to people who have worked at least four days on our trails, RATC T-shirts to people who have worked at least seven days on our trails, and both a RATC hat and T-shirt to people who have worked at least nine days on our trails. The year of record is October 1 to September 30, which is the federal fiscal year. The 2000 – 2001 winners are for RATC hats: Bob Athey, Todd Athey, Suzanne Barnett, H.R. Blankenship, Peggy Bryant, Brian Chisom, Lucy Downs, Kenny Garrett, Ron McCorkle, Sarah Morrow, Jonathan Reed, Steve Reisinger, Mary Elizabeth Thomson, Jimmy Whitney; for T-shirts: Laurie Adkins, Jimmie Black, Lynn Bryant, Adam Cheslow, Fred Coughlan, John Lynham, Lucien Metayer; for both : Kevin Black, Malcolm Black, Hal Cantrill, David Cheslow, Red Crone, David Downs, Bill Gorge, Dana Helsley, David Hicks, Jim Hutchings, Linda Hutchings, Stephanie Kent, Bob Minor, Charles Parry, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Maurice Turner, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher. This is a total of 40 winners, up from 24 last year. I would like to see the level of activity remain this high, but don't really expect that to happen. Since most of the increase can be attributed to work on the Sarver Hollow Shelter, I think it is apparent that some people find building a new shelter more attractive than building new trail. Therefore

a decrease seems likely next year. I leave this as a challenge for you to prove me wrong! I do my best to keep accurate records for determining these awards, but acknowledge errors are possible. Therefore, if anyone knows of any corrections that should be made to this list, please let me know.

We report our total numbers of workers and work hours to ATC and agency partners in the fall. This year we reported 178 workers logging 4600 hours. This is up from 133 workers and 3050 hours a year ago. As 1640 hours were logged on the Sarver Hollow Shelter, the reason for the increase is clear. Also, we reported 300 hours of travel time and 700 hours of clerical and meeting time. This represents a new category, so there are no comparative figures from last year.

For our winter work hikes we will do some clipping and possibly regrading on the AT in Bland County in January. In February we plan to build some more steps in the Pickle Branch area. In March, we will do some trail rehabilitation work on Catawba Mountain between VA 311 and McAfee's Knob. This work may include more steps and regrading of trail.

*Charles Parry*

## Website Update

The RATC website (<http://www.ratc.org>) may look the same but behind the scenes it is changing dramatically! We're moving the entire site to a computer in Virginia (it's currently on a computer in Ontario, Canada). We're installing a more powerful database and rewriting the website using a different programming language.

What will all that mean to you? It means that in the next few months our website will become MUCH more interactive.... you'll be able to enter information about trails and shelters that need maintenance, add your

own pictures and links for others to see, sign up to help on projects, get email reminders of upcoming events, change your mailing address, see the status of your dues payments and MUCH MORE.

If you want to receive email updates about the webpage and other RATC news, join our current email list - just enter your email address on our website and click 'Submit.' See you on the cyber-trail.

*David A. Cheslow, [dcheslow@rev.net](mailto:dcheslow@rev.net)*

## Annual Meeting

6:00 PM Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at Christ Lutheran Church at the corner of Grandin and Brandin. Reservations are essential and need to be **received** with \$13 by Dave & Lucy Downs, Down Home Bed & Breakfast, 5209 Catawba Valley Dr, Catawba, VA 24070 by **March 1<sup>st</sup>**. The speaker is not yet confirmed, but you will be pleased. The

caterer and menu are the same as last year, including honey ham and seafood casserole, spinach salad and fruit bowl, and steamed assorted vegetables and assorted desserts. Questions – call Dave or Lucy Downs, 540-384-6865.

*Dave & Lucy Downs*

## The Hikemaster Needs HELP!

Our Spring hikes will be scheduled at my home on Monday evening, February 11, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. Suzanne Osborne and Ed Wallace were exceedingly helpful in November in getting the Winter hike schedule together.--So if you want to express your opinion, or perhaps schedule a hike,

please make a difference by calling me before 2/11/02 or by coming to the meeting. Remember : February 11th at 7:00 p.m. Thank you for your interest.

**Suzanne Barnett 772-4273**

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## Sarver Hollow Shelter Dedication

On October 20, 2001, RATC dedicated the new shelter on Sinking Creek Mountain - Sarver Hollow Shelter. The shelter was built with memorial funds donated by the family of Scott Marshall Riddick. We could not have asked for a better day for such a fine occasion. The weather was absolutely perfect as well as the glorious fall color.

Approximately 35 people were in attendance including the Riddick family. A picture of the shelter was presented to Dr. & Mrs. Riddick by Lucien Metayer. We also had Jenny Worthington representing the Forest Service and Jodi Bickle representing the Regional Office of the ATC. We thank them for their presence.

The dedication service included words of thanks to the volunteers from Lucien Metayer and Don Nulph. Dave Cheslow read the information he placed in the trail register. Kevin Black assisted with the ribbon cutting. After the dedication, all hikers enjoyed refreshments provided by Dave Cheslow and Stephanie Kent.

So that hikers who use the shelter can thank the Riddick family, the following excerpt, along with pictures of Scott Riddick, was placed in the front of the trail register:

“The Sarver Hollow Shelter is a memorial to Scott Marshall Riddick. Scott was an avid Appalachian Trail hiker who wanted, but never had the opportunity, to have a thru-hiking adventure. He gave many hours of his time as a volunteer constructing the Trail. Through this shelter, Scott continues his legacy of giving to the Appalachian Trail community for many decades to come.

Scott was a special education teacher who enjoyed rock music, learning about the Civil War and reading the

works of "beat generation" authors like Jack Kerouac. He died of a coronary in 1998 at the age of 34.

The shelter is named after the family of Henry and Sara Sarver who lived on this part of Sinking Creek Mountain for almost 100 years starting around 1850. The remains of the two-story log cabin built by Henry can still be found about 50 yards downhill from the spring, and to the right. A small cemetery contains the graves of four Sarvers about 150 yards northeast of the cabin ruins beneath a row of four cedar trees.

Sarver Hollow Shelter was constructed during the spring and summer of 2001 by volunteer members of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club. The RATC would like to thank the United States Forest Service, The Appalachian Trail Conference and the 55 volunteers who contributed over 1600 hours of labor to make this shelter a reality.

Please join us on the pages of this shelter log in saying "Thank You" to Scott Riddick and his family for allowing us to enjoy the beauty and history of this place with the memory of friends who have gone, the company of friends present and the promise of friends just around the Trail's next turn."

We hope that once the trail register is complete, it will be returned to Dr. Riddick. Dr. Riddick was most appreciative of the idea that he might be able to receive the trail register. Again, thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the shelter! You must admit, we had a good time building it! Please be sure to sign the trail register when you go to enjoy the beautiful shelter!

**Stephanie Kent**

## Hike Reports

### Sunday, August 12, 2001 - 1:00 PM Harkening Hill

Ed Wallace (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde (assistant).

I'm sorry I can't give the names of the hike participants; but we ran into one heck of a rainstorm and the rain soaked the sheet of paper I had the names on. (Yeah, and the dog ate my homework, too.)

The hike started out normal enough. We saw deer at the visitor center, four very large brown birds about the size of a hawk and a field of wild bergamot covered with butterflies.

We ran into the rain just as we were about to go to the Johnson farm.

### Sunday, September 9, 2001 - 8:30 AM Tar Jacket Ridge, Cole Mtn/Old Hotel Trail Loop

Dick Clark (Co-leader), Eric Miller (Co-leader), Gary Hale, Lee Mitchell, Laura Montague, Bill Newell, Bobbie Stitche, Ed Wallace

I remember the first time I met Eric Miller. It was on a hike I like to do that runs by Sherando Lake and White Rock Falls. Eric told me that, although he was a competitive swimmer, he had only recently started hiking. He had done a few afternoon hikes, but this was his first all-day one. He even seemed a little apprehensive about how well he would do.

He obviously needn't have worried. In short order, Eric was regularly leading hikes for the club. And not just any old hikes. He specialized in the 15-20 mile (and up) variety that sometimes would attract only one or two additional hardy souls. The most notorious of these was a purported 16-miler that turned out to be 24. Only a 50% error--hey, no problem!

As it turned out, September 9 was the last time I would hike with Eric. His untimely death on October 28 saddened many of us who had covered a lot of trail miles with him

I probably knew Eric as well as anyone in the club. Frequently, when I was walking through South Roanoke on my way up Mill Mountain, I would run across Eric out exercising his dogs. Several times he joined me for the rest of the walk. I learned that beneath Eric's façade of loquacity and edgy humor,

there was a kind and gentle man who loved animals and had a passion for books.

I am glad that I knew Eric for a few years. I wish it had been longer.

### Sunday, September 9, 2001 - 1:00 PM Sunset Field to Petite's Gap

Mervin Brower (leader), Kay Clatterbuck (assistant), Blanche Hale, Marianne Demkó, Jim Law, Cynthia Chan and Zetta Campbell.

We met at East Market Mall in nice 85-degree weather. We then drove to Sunset Fields where we met Zetta. Jim and I then went and dropped off one car at Petites Gap while the rest of the group started hiking. The weather changed and it started to rain as we climbed up Apple Orchard Mountain. It was only a shower, so we did not get too wet under the trees. The rest of the hike was in fog, which made for comfortable walking but no views. We stopped at the Thunder Ridge shelter for everyone to catch up with us. From there we went the rest of the way. The first of the group came out at 5:30 and the rest at 7:00. Kay had brought along a pair of radios which enabled us at the bottom to know where the rest of the group were.

### Sunday, September 16, 2001 - 8:30 AM Sinking Creek Mountain

Bobbie Stitche (Leader), H.R. Blankenship, Henry McLain, Lee Mitchell, Laura Montague

On a beautiful cool Sunday morning we left a car at the northern trailhead on Va. 621 and headed to the southern trailhead on Va. 630. At the beginning of the hike we passed the large blazed Keffer Oak tree and began the climb to the crest of Sinking Creek Mountain. We went to see the new Sarver Hollow shelter and explored the area near the shelter. We walked over the rock ledges and had great views of the Craig Creek Valley and mountain ridges. We saw the wild goats and then began to descend as we finished the hike.

### Sunday, September 16, 2001 - 1:00 PM Mill Mountain Loop

Dick Clark & Mike Ferguson (Co-leaders), David Bowers, Kathy Burton, Jean Donnan, Billy Ferguson, Julie Gale, Georgia Gallaher, Dana Helsley, Sherry

Kessel, Jim Law, Charlotte Lomax, Betty Matthews, Jimmy Ribble, Cody Sigmon, Herb and Whitley

Actually, Mike Ferguson was the leader of record for this hike. Accompanied by his young son, Billy, Mike and the rest of us left the parking lot on Riverland Road and proceeded uphill on the Star Trail. When we reached the top of Mill Mountain, however, Mike decided that the entire loop might be too much for Billy. At that point, the Fergusons peeled off from the rest of the group, leaving me in charge.

The afternoon was warm, the sky was clear, and the view from the Star was especially appealing. Even the recent events of September 11 could not spoil the day. Before we started down the old Mill Mountain Road, some of us took a look at the new Discovery Center.

Halfway down the road, we picked up the first of several paths that would eventually bring us back to the Star Trail. Then we simply retraced our steps back to the parking lot. The lot was now completely full and several cars were lined up along the entrance road. Clearly we were not the only ones who thought that this was a great day to be outdoors.

#### **Sunday, September 23, 2001 - 8:30 AM Miller's Cove Workhike**

Charles Parry (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Homer Witcher, Suzanne Barnett, Bill Gordge, Malcolm Black, Dana Helsley, Fred Coughlan, Search (thru-hiker), Brian Chisom, Mary Elizabeth Thomson, Lia Sansom, Sarah Morrow, Sarah Gillespie, Carrie Trand

Today we walked in to avoid the rough ride on the fire road. We began work where we left off with the Konnarock crew, after making a few adjustments to the flag line to avoid some large roots. Before lunch time the Roanoke College group joined us and the dirt really flew. By quitting time only about 200 feet of trail remained to be dug and we knew that we could finish it the next time. On the way out we walked the old A.T. back to the shelter side trail. I had forgotten how bad the old trail really was.

#### **Saturday, September 29, 2001 - 6:00 AM Old Rag**

Ed Wallace (leader), Suzanne Barnett (assistant), H.R.Blankenship, Jim Law, Kenny and Jesse Garrett, Laura Montague, David Wickersham, Gary Hale, Sharon Rippee

In my opinion this is the best hike (scramble) in the whole state.

Good hike, and nobody got hurt.

#### **Sunday, September 30, 2001 - 1:00 PM Sharp Top**

Linda Akers (leader), Joyce Fisher (assistant), Bill Mistele, Georgia Gallaher, Sherry Kessel, Jo Switzer, Lisa Mayhew, Jessica Crews, Lee Mitchell, Julie Gale, Cynthia Chan, Marianne Demkó, Betty Matthews, Charlotte Lomax, Gina Chamberlain

Great day and a good turnout! Early on, the "leader" became the "sweep" and Joyce led the hike. Uneventful trek up to Sharp Top, and, as usual the camaraderie and scenery were enjoyed by all. Pleasant temperature, leaves just beginning to show some color. - That's it!

#### **Saturday, October 7, 2001 1:00 PM James River Footbridge**

Bobbie Stitcher (Leader), Jim and Jennie Watkins, Malcolm Black, Lois Smith, Mary Lou Gaminde, Jean Warren, Neil and Debbie Fitzpatrick, Ralph Hart, Jim Law, Lee Mitchell, Mark Totty, Gary Hale, Dana Helsley, Joseph McManus, Richard LaBarbera, A.J. LaBarbera, Larry Austin, Treva Carter.

On a beautiful, cool, sunny and cloudless Sunday afternoon twenty hikers headed to the parking lot on U.S. 501 near the James River Foot Bridge. We hiked over the magnificent foot bridge and along the James River and Matt's Creek on the new A.T. trail. We stopped at the Matt's Creek Shelter had snacks and headed back to the old A.T. trail. Here we had views of the James River and the dam. We came out on U.S. 501 and walked back to the parking lot. It was a perfect day to hike and see this wonderful foot bridge

**Sunday, October 7, 2001-7:30 AM  
Blue Bend, Monongahela National Forest**

John Lynham (leader), Rusty and Laura Schundler (assistants), H.R. Blankenship, Carl Bagby, Kris Peckman, Rod Liebl

We ventured to the wilds of West Virginia for this hike. It's just above White Sulphur Springs. Mileage from Daleville is about 75, and the club does a lot of hikes that require more driving. Blue Bend is a designated recreation area in the Monongahela National Forest with a campground, picnic area and about 15 miles of trails. The leader was concerned about trail conditions when he previewed the hike in midsummer, but Forest Service personnel were responsive when contacted and got things pretty well cleaned up. Three trails were used to provide about 10 ½ miles of hiking, with a short 15-minute car switch. The weather was great, cool and a bit windy. Several miles of trail parallel Anthony Creek, a big, beautiful mountain stream. Lunch was at the mouth of Laurel Creek as it entered Anthony Creek. Carl turned up a rock with many fossil impressions at this location. Our hike ended as we crossed a swinging bridge leading to our waiting shuttle car. The Greenbrier River Trail – a 75-mile hiking/biking rail trail – can be accessed from the Blue Bend trails.

Our primary focus should always be the Appalachian Trail, but it's nice to stretch out and find something new once in a while. Note: Many thanks to Maurice Turner for assisting with the preview hike last summer.

**Sunday, October 14, 2001 - 7:30 AM  
Elk Garden to Grayson Highland**

Bobbie Stitche, H R Blankenship  
Cancelled because of rain.

**Sunday, October 14, 2001 - 1:00 PM  
McAfee's Knob**

Linda Akers, Terri McClure  
Rained out.

**Sunday, October 21, 2001 - 8:00 AM  
Douthat State Park**

John Lynham (leader), Laura Montague, Dana Helsley, Bob and Kris Peckman, Gary Hale, H.R. Blankenship, Bill Newell

Fifty miles north of Roanoke is a gem of a state park that seems to be a secret to many members of RATC. There are over forty miles of hiking trails, and hikes of various distances and levels of exertion can be found. Our 9 ½ mile (less than 9 miles, according to one precision-minded, GPS-toting hiker) loop took us up hollows, past waterfalls (actually watertrickles at this time of year) and to a stunning overlook for lunch (the fast hikers got there too early for lunch). Everyone in the group was a strong hiker, and there was some discussion about whether this hike qualified as a truly strenuous one. Since Douthat State Park is mostly surrounded by national forest land, it is possible to connect with other trails from the state park. The weather was beautiful, and the only real downside seemed to be that we missed the peak of fall color. Oh yes, we also missed Dick Clark, as he couldn't join us as assistant leader due to being under the weather.

**Sunday, October 28, 2001 - 8:30 AM  
Miller's Cove Workhike**

Charles Parry (leader), Bob and Kris Peckman (assistants), Don Hoke, Dana Helsley, Homer and Therese Witcher

Saturday was very cold with scattered snow flurries, so I didn't expect to be able to paint blazes on Sunday. Nevertheless, I optimistically loaded the paint in my truck. When we met at Trout Creek on Sunday morning, it had warmed up so much that I decided we would be able to blaze. Bob, Kris and I spent part of the morning scouting out an additional short relocation which I decided we needed to seek Forest Service approval for before doing. After that, Bob and Kris began blazing the remainder of the relocation, while the rest of us dug the last several feet of the relocation. As we had some extra time, we touched up several spots on the relocation where the trail had a bit too much side slope. By quitting time, the Miller's Cove relocation that was begun in June was now completely open.

**Sunday, October 28, 2001 - 1:00 PM  
Deer/North Mountain Trails**

Zetta Campbell (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde (assistant), Guy Brooks, Susan Rilee, Peter Traver

Before doing the scheduled hike on Grouse, North Mountain and Deer Trails, leaders Zetta and Mary Lou went to scout out the route because conditions in this area keep changing and Mary Lou had never been there before. They drove two cars to F.S. Road 224. To make a long story short, after driving back and forth, they spotted a definite trail where Deer Trail should be, but marked only by a pathetic yellow smudge on a post. You had to walk over to see it. Grouse Trail, however, had an excellent sign. They decided to hike up it. By the way, the sky was covered with low, black, threatening clouds, and a cold wind hurled sleet and snow flurries at them. At the intersection with North Mountain Trail there was that bear-chewed sign, now weather-beaten. Mary Lou wanted to keep on going, so the two headed toward Deer Trail. After climbing over several knobs (This is a knobby mountain!), they found a trail which likely was Deer Trail, but again there was no sign and, anyway, Mary Lou's car was not at the trail head. Therefore, the two retraced their steps to Zetta's car, a total of five miles which felt more like six or seven!

The next day, the mood of the weather had changed completely. The clouds were gone; the sky was a cheery blue; and the sun smiled upon the group. Unfortunately, Mary Lou had developed a sore toe on yesterday's hike and did not come out. After that scouting trip, the leader decided to go up what seemed to be Deer Trail, and Guy wanted to go on to Route 311; so, a car switch was set up, not without difficulty in spotting the trail again. There were yellow blazes, some good, some not so good. Sure enough, the trail met North Mountain Trail just where Mary Lou and Zetta had seen it the day before. Yes, this was Deer Trail. The group stopped for a snack break and, lo and behold, Siegfried Kolmstetter emerged with his dog, having also come up the trail. A long time club member, Siegfried goes out on his own now. After he went back down the trail, the group continued on North Mountain Trail to Route 311 over the relocated part at the end of the mountain and to Zetta's car. While Susan and

Peter were waiting at Zetta's car, some people stopped by in their car and asked if they were broken down. Peter jokingly answered that Susan wasn't but he was!

**Sat: November 3, 2001 - 7:30 AM  
759 or 728 to Damascus**

Jimmy Whitney (leader), Cindy Bowles, Don Hoke

Our drive down I-81 started out overcast and eventually rained on us as we headed toward Damascus to leave a car. It was a fairly quick jaunt up Route 58 to the large wooden trestle that the AT shares with the VA Creeper Trail. We only had to avoid a few bicycles before the AT separated from the old railroad bed and headed into the woods. Ground was pretty wet from the morning's rain and there were no views due to the fog. By noon, the sun was out and warming things up pretty quickly. Lunch was enjoyed above Whitetop Laurel Creek as we viewed horses and bikes on the Creeper Trail--while they had no idea we were above them. By late afternoon, we enjoyed some great views of Whitetop (we think). Got into Damascus right about 5:00, so still had daylight to walk down the main drag. Don even managed to snap some pictures in the street while traffic halted--of course they're used to that in this trail-friendly town. Turned out to be a great day for hiking. Thought about Eric Miller on this hike--the club will miss you.

**Sunday, November 4, 2001 - 1:00 PM  
Rt. 621 to Niday Shelter**

Terri McClure 375-2650, Linda Akers 776-1969

**Sunday, November 11, 2001 - 8:30 AM  
Miller's Cove workhike**

Charles Parry (leader), Bob and Kris Peckman (assistants), Greg Still, Dana Helsley, Suzanne Barnett, Jim Wray, Fred Coughlan, Malcolm Black, Mary Elizabeth Thomson, Brian Chisom, Lia Sansom, Homer and Bennett Witcher

Just across the Trout Creek Bridge from VA 621 there was a short, steep section of trail containing a partially completed set of rock steps. With the help of Hal Cantrill, we came up with a design of wooden steps constructed from landscaping

timbers that were pinned together with rebar. We started one set at the bottom and another part way up. I had cut and drilled the step pieces the day before, but unfortunately my holes were too small for the rebar. Therefore, we had to redrill the holes with the two hand drills, in addition to cutting and drilling the side pieces as we went. That part of the operation was so slow that Bob went home to get more drills. Also, we found loose stones which we placed as rip-rap on both sides of the steps. Shortly after lunch these steps were complete and we moved to Pickle Branch Shelter, where we constructed more steps between the shelter and the spring. We quit work shortly after 4:00 pm, feeling that we had done a pretty good job.

**Sunday, November 11, 2001 - 1:00 PM  
Fenwick Mines/Waterfall**

Ed Wallace (leader), Dick Clark (assistant), Jim Law, Susan Rike, Tom Sowers, Georgia Gallaher, Rod Field, Mary Anne Johnson, Bill Clarkson, Peter Shower, Jack Lienhardt, Gary and Cathy Tinaglia, Zetta Campbell

Nice, easy, flat, dry hike. The waterfall was just a trickle (not unlike my bathroom sink). Wildlife spotted: pileated woodpecker and a skunk. After a little effort by some of our hikers, we found the blue pond (which was not blue) left over from the iron mining of days past.

**Sunday, November 18, 2001 - 8:30 AM  
John's Creek Mountain Rt. 658 to Rt. 42**

Charles Parry (Leader), Linda Akers (Assistant), Gary Adams, Sarah Burns, Sharon Harrison, H.R. Blankenship, Jim Folger, Harry Neumann

What coordination! The group from Roanoke carpooled from Orange Market and arrived at Rt. 658 just as Charles, Jim & Harry pulled in to the meeting spot. A short jaunt up 658 put us at the top of the mountain and trailhead. After introductions, we set foot to the yellow blazed trail

with H.R. in the lead. We regrouped at the fire road for a short break, then headed on toward Kelly's Knob, stopping for lunch on the way. It was a beautiful, cloudless, 60+ degree day. After a stop at the knob, we inspected Laurel Creek Shelter and the abandoned homestead on the way back across pastures to our waiting vehicle at Rt. 42. Drivers retrieved their cars, then their passengers, and headed for home. One rapidly spreading forest fire was evident on the way back down Rt. 42.

**Sunday, November 18, 2001 - 1:00 PM  
Smart View Loop**

Kenny Garrett (leader), Mervin Brower (assistant), Lance Garrett (mascot), Blanche Brower, Ralph Hart, Georgia Gallaher, Dana Helsley, Zetta Campbell, Dave, Linda, and Matt Sutton, Sherry Kessel

One of the last beautiful, warm days of fall. The temperature was in the mid 60s on this sunny afternoon. The views were a little hazy, but still great. The front three were lucky enough to see a few turkeys. Everyone had a great time, with the only complaint being the stroll was too short. I look forward to many more strolls with such great people in such beautiful places.

**Sunday, November 25, 2001 - 1:00PM  
Chestnut Ridge Trail**

Suzanne Barnett (leader), Dave Sutton (assist.)  
Members: Jim Law and Gary Adams. Guest:  
Bruce Harnsderger.

It had been raining and overcast Saturday and Sunday. But on Sunday afternoon at 1:00 p.m. we meet at the overloop, and began a hike that turned out to be very enjoyable. It was in the 60's and so warm we were wet from perspiration, not rain. Gary even had his shorts on to prove the unseasonable weather we are having.

**Hike Schedule (Cont.)**

**Friday, March 1, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Reservation - Annual Meeting & Banquet**

Dave & Lucy Downs 540-384-6865

**Sunday, March 3, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Punch Bowl Mountain to the James River**

11.5 miles, Moderate/Strenuous, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140, HR Blankenship 776-3468

**Sunday, March 3, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Sulfur Ridge Loop**

5 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee  
Zetta Campbell 366-8165, Mervin Brower 387-9732

**Saturday, March 9, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Annual Meeting & Banquet**

Reservations by March 1  
Dave & Lucy Downs 540-384-6865

**Sunday, March 10, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Andy Layne Trail to Tinker Cliffs**

8 miles, moderate/strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee  
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Dick Clark 989-7053

**Sunday, March 10, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Catawba Valley Trail**

5 miles, moderate/strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee  
Suzanne Osborne 982-2936, Linda Akers 776-1969

**Sunday, March 17, 2002 - 8:30 AM  
Catawba Mountain Workhike**

\$1.50 carpool fee, Charles Parry 540-951-1402  
Leonard & Laurie Adkins 384-7485

**Sunday, March 17, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Bottom Creek Gorge**

5 miles, easy, \$2.50 carpool fee  
Malcolm & Jimmie Black 929-4369  
Jean Warren 384-6229

**Sunday, March 24, 2002 - 8:00 AM  
Black Ridge to Rocky Knob Campground**

6 miles, moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Lucien Metayer 344-1877

**Sunday, March 24, 2002 - 1:00 PM  
Devil's Marble Yard**

5 miles, moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee  
Kenny Garrett 890-8946, Jim Law 721-8964

**Saturday, March 30, 2002 - 8:30 AM  
Stone Coal Gap to 311**

13 miles, strenuous, \$2.50 carpool fee  
Maurice Turner 334-2128, Jim Law 721-8964

**Saturday, March 30, 2002 - 9:30 AM  
Star Trail - Mill Mountain Loop**

5 miles, easy/moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee  
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273, Zetta Campbell 366-8165

**Roanoke Appalachian  
Trail Club Application  
New & Renewal**

- If accepted for membership, I agree to:
1. Support the objectives of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
  2. Abide by the rules of the National and State Parks and Forests
  3. Respect the interests of the owner when on private property
  4. Keep trails and woodlands free of litter and
  5. Abide by instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips

Names(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership     New 1 year \$20     New 2 year \$35     Renew 1 year \$15     Renew 2 year \$30  
 Individual Member     New 1 year \$15     New 2 year \$25     Renew 1 year \$10     Renew 2 year \$20  
 Make checks payable to **RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282**     Life \$500