

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB



Winter 2005

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.



Bridge rebuilding activities over Catawba Creek
Photos courtesy of Dana Helsley

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TRAIL BLAZER
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Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Samuel A. Golston
Lynne & Bill Jacoby
Ellen & Gabriel Szego
Maya Bohler
Norma Davenport

Chet Chandler
Feeny Steven
Maxine Drewry
Charles Musgrove
Vicky Sawyer Herrala

Bert Spetzler
Jim & Deanna Dodd
Sue Norwood & Jim O'Neil

We look forward to meeting you soon - hiking on the trail, at work, social event, or a board meeting.

Mervin Brower

President's Message

The RATC Board has taken a strong position with the Forest Service against ORVs. There was a move to mandate inclusion of ORVs in all the forests which we found not in the best interests of the AT.

We have formed a committee to look at the web site. Please go to www.ratc.org, use it, and give us feedback. David Cheslow created this web site with very little help, in the form of testing and comments, from the club. Please send me any comments about the site.

I found an American vendor for the wonderful German loppers that Malcolm Black introduced to us years ago sold under the Scott name. Charles Parry also has a catalog of tools used by the NFS. Good tools are available if you like to have your own.

Welcome to Amanda Grau, the new Regional Program Assistant in Teresa Martinez's office.

Bob Peckman

Trail Supervisor's Report

It is time to announce the worker awards for the 2003 – 2004 year. Four days with at least two work hikes will win you an RATC hat, seven days with at least four work hikes will win you an RATC T-shirt and nine days with at least five work hikes will win you both. Those who won a hat are: Larry Austin, Wes Barnes, Suzanne Barnett, Blanche Brower, Peggy Bryant, Hal Cantrill, Dave Cheslow, Bill Floyd, Kenny Garrett, Jim Hutchings, Siegfried Kolmstetter, Jerry Kyle, Jim Lewis, Mac McDaniel, Jim Overholser, Bob Peckman, Greg Still, Bob Stimson, Maurice Turner and Homer Witcher. The one person winning a T-shirt is: Bob Foutz. Those who won both are: Laurie Adkins, Malcolm Black, Mervin Brower, Fred Coughlan, Bill Gorge, Dana Helsley, Charles Parry, Kris Peckman and

Jonathan Reed. I want to congratulate all these winners who will receive their awards at the annual banquet. Let me acknowledge that our record keeping is not perfect, so if I missed anyone who qualified, please let me know.

The club totals for 2003-04 on Park Service lands were 95 people working 2126 hours and on Forest Service land 79 people working 1741 hours. This gave a total of 138 people working 3867 hours since 36 people worked on both types of land.

Next year's Konnarock schedule is now available. Here are the dates when the crew will be working on RATC trail: May 26 – 30, August 4 – 8 on Angel's Rest rehabilitation and June 9 – 13, July 14 - 18 on the power-line relocation south of Pearisburg.

Charles Parry

National Park Service Awards

As you may have seen in previous issues of this Blazer, the National Park Service began a system of volunteer service awards a few years ago. Within certain guidelines they left it up to the trail clubs to draw up their own rules. We originally decided to consider only service that occurred after Oct. 1, 2002. This year some board members suggested that we review the rules and consider all lifetime service. It was agreed to do so, but we only considered members who are still active. Recently, a committee of Leonard Adkins, Dick Clark, Jim Hutchings and Charles Parry met to consider who should get these awards. Several of you had sent us your estimates in response to the request in the last issue. We also had considerable data on the past 3 years. Some people listed below already received part or all of their award last year.

People who have 40 or more hours receive a pin. These people are: Bob Foutz, Carol McPeak, Charlie Scharnberg, Chase Davidson, David Downs, David Sutton, Don Hoke, H.R. Blankenship, Jean Warren, Jerry Kyle, Jim Lewis, Leslie Kay, Lois Smith, Lucy Downs, Matt Roberts, Mike Kinzie, Pat Mankin, Ralph Hart, Sarah King, Shelby Dickerson, Susan Dickerson, Wes Barnes.

People who have 125 or more hours receive two pins. These people are: Blanche Brower, Jim Overholser, Larry Austin, Laura Montague, Linda King, Liz Belcher, Mary Lou Gaminde, Mike Reilly, Roger Holnback, Virginia Reilly.

People who have 250 or more hours receive two pins and a patch. These people are: Bill Lamson, Bobbie Stitcher, Brian Chisom, Brian Kelley, David Hicks, Ed Bessell, Frank Haranzo, Gloria Parry, Greg Still, John Lynham, Jonathan Reed, Liz Lamson, Mervin Brower, Mike Sowder, Red Crone, Stephanie Kent, Terri McClure.

People who have 500 or more hours receive two pins, a patch and a hat. These people are: Dana Helsley, David Cheslow, Ed Wallace, Fred Coughlan, Jimmie Black, Kenny Garrett, Kevin Black, Lucien Metayer, Lynn Bryant, Maurice Turner, Mike Ferguson, Peggy Bryant, Ron McCorkle, Sue Scanlin, Suzanne Barnett, Ursula Kolmstetter.

People who have 1000 or more hours receive two pins, a patch, a hat and a vest. These people are: Bill Floyd, Bill Gordge, Bob Peckman, Charles Parry, Clyde Perdue, Dick Clark, Don Nulph, Hal Cantrill, Homer Witcher, Jim Hutchings, Jimmy Whitney, Kris Peckman, Laurie Adkins, Leonard Adkins, Linda Akers, Linda Hutchings, Mac McDaniel, Malcolm Black, Siegfried Kolmstetter, Therese Witcher, Zetta Campbell.

As these hours are cumulative, active members who continue to do service can expect more awards in the future. Those who received the maximum award will start over again at 0 as of Oct. 1, 2004. Charles Parry has the totals for everyone stored on his computer. If you wish to know your total as of Oct. 1, 2004 or believe we have your hours set too low, send an e-mail to Parry@math.vt.edu.

The Annual Banquet & Business Meeting

Roanoke Appalachian Trail club
Annual Banquet and Business Meeting

Christ Lutheran Church, Corner of Grandin and Brandon
6:00 PM Saturday, March 12, 2004
Dinner served promptly at 6:30 PM

Menu: seafood casserole, chicken, spinach salad, veggies, desserts, and beverages
Speaker: To be announced.

Please RSVP by March 1 using the reservation form on page 15.

Hike Reports

Sunday, August 15, 2004 7:00 AM

Hog Camp Gap to Punchbowl (BRP)

Laura Montague (leader), Kenny Garrett (co-leader), John Miller, Carl Cornett, Diana Christopoulos, Shelley Himel, Charlie Scharnberg, Sara Jo Emmerich, Ellen & Gabriel Szego

It was a beautiful day for hiking. This hike enables people to get the section from the Old Hotel Trail to US Route 60. This little section of 4 miles is frequently missed by doing the Cold Mountain/Old Hotel Loop.

The hike took us below the base of the Pedlar Dam. This route of the AT will be rerouted away from the dam for security reasons. The water over the dam was beautiful and some very old roses were growing along the road from the dam.

It was a strenuous hike but everyone had a great time.

Sunday, August 22, 2004 8:00 AM

Rock Castle Gorge

Lois Smith (co-leader), Gary Hale (co-leader), Carl Cornett, H.R. Blankenship, Sara Emmerich, Shelley Himel, Charlie Scharnberg, John Miller, Charles Musgrove, Mike Vaughn & Carolyn McPeak

Carolyn met us at the trailhead and we started our hike with Gary being in the lead. This is one of Gary's favorite hikes and he has hiked this trail many times. The day was overcast and on the cool side. After the ascent the rest seemed easy. We had lunch at an overlook near the shelter. There are many interesting sights on this hike, rock fireplaces still standing and huge rock formations views and the list goes on. We had a diverse group and most in this group had never hiked this trail before. We had cold drinks and snacks waiting at the end of our hike and all seemed to have enjoyed our day.

Sunday, September 12, 2004 7:00 AM

Garden Mountain (Rt. 623) to Rich Valley (Rt. 42)

Kris Peckman (leader), Carl Bagby (assistant), Don Hoke, Linda King & Laura Montague

An Achilles tendon problem prevented Carl, our Assistant Leader, from hiking, but not from providing valuable support to the hike. Not only did he bring with him an aerial view and a description of Burke's Garden from Farm Bureau magazine, but he drove all the hikers straight to the trailhead, then drove a considerable distance to meet us at the road crossing 11

miles into the hike, just in case we should be running late and want to bail out there.

At 9:30 we started hiking. Carl accompanied us for the first mile, having discovered in just the past few days that his Achilles was mending. Burke's Garden was as neat and lovely a pastoral setting as always, but our view of it was partially obscured by haze and weed-tree growth. (Carl, on the other hand, got to see it close up, as he toured while we hiked.) The hike begins with a stiff warm-up climb, and then becomes a ridge walk at around 4000 feet elevation for a few miles before dropping steeply down into Walker's Gap at 3500 feet and then climbing to Chestnut Knob at 4409 feet. We could see that PATH and probably Konnarock have been doing a lot of work on the trail leading up to Chestnut Knob.

At Chestnut Knob is a four-sided stone shelter with bunks that is beautifully preserved and maintained. Apparently Konnarock was also involved in restoring it in recent years. After lunch there, we began our descent to Poor Valley, passing through two large areas which are maintained as meadows and offer beautiful views of the surrounding mountains. There is also a spring-fed pond where Don refilled his water containers.

The final steep descent to the road at Poor Valley has new log stairs. Carl hiked about a mile up from the road to meet us, after which he declared his Achilles healed. At that point we concluded that we would not be able to finish the remaining 6.4 miles before dark, and anyway, we were too pooped, so we drove out and headed back to Roanoke. We need to schedule this hike for next May or June when the days are longer.

Sunday, September 12, 2004 1:00 PM

Carvins Cove Boat Launch to Cemetery

Georgia Gallaher (leader), Mary Russell, Madison (dog), Mary Lou Gaminde & Sherry Kessel.

This hike usually has a larger turn-out, so we were surprised when only four of us showed up at the boat launch area of Carvins Cove. The hike was most enjoyable except for the temperature getting hotter and making it a bit uncomfortable at times. We went past the cemetery to the bank of the cove and took a break there. The group had many conversations going during the hike which made for an interesting Sunday afternoon hike.

**Sunday, September 19, 2004 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

Charles Parry (leader), Jim Hutchings (assistant leader), Bob Foutz, Jerry Kyle, Wes Barnes, Bill Gordge, Brian Chisom, Jesse King, Melissa Puppa, Laurie Adkins, Leonard Adkins & Lisa McFerrin

Today, we started work on the lower part (below the road) of the McAfee Knob relocation. On the way in we had to stop a couple of times to clear blow-downs out of the road. The work was routine, trail clearing, fire raking followed by side-hill digging. In mid-morning the Roanoke College group joined us and informed us that Leonard and Laurie were doing trail clearing. A bit later, we saw their car go up the fire-road. After lunch, a group of us decided to walk down to the Catawba Mountain Shelter to look at the campsites that Kyle Marion had installed as his eagle scout project. They looked great. On the way back we stepped off to the side to let a hiker pass. As she was about to pass me, we both recognized each other. It was Lisa, a student of mine during the past three semesters. She was headed to the Knob, so I invited her to join us on her return trip. She, Leonard and Laurie all joined us for the final shift of the day. By quitting time we had about 200 yards of new trail.

**Sunday, September 19, 2004 1:00 PM
New River (Rt. 460) to Angels Rest**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (co-leaders) & Kenny Garrett (co-leader), Neil McKinney & Lance Garrett

We met at the Orange Market at Hanging Rock parking lot. We started our hike at Wades Grocery off of 460. We crossed over 460 and started up the trail. It took us about 1½ hours to reach the top. The weather was bright sunny and clear after all out rain. The temperature was about 75. There was one blowdown due to Ivan near the top. We met a blue tick hound dog when coming up the trail. We thought he belonged to a group of people coming down but they said not. So he joined us in going up the trail and stayed with us at the top. Lance thought he was great to go down the trail with. When we got to the first road his owner was there to pick him up.

We continued down without any further excitement. We made it down in one hour.

**Saturday, September 25, 2004
Andy Layne Trail Bridge Work Hike**

Charles Parry, Clyde Perdue, Dick Clark, Maurice Turner, Hal Cantrill, Gary Bible, Dana Helsley & Bill Gordge

The Catawba Creek bridge had washed out in one of the recent hurricanes. I drove my truck in, while

most of the crew walked in. The plan was to tear the bridge apart, move the stringers back in place and re-assemble the bridge. Most of the crew went to work on disassembling the bridge, while Hal, Clyde and I got set up on the other side of the creek. We attached a pulley block to a tree and cut a skid and attached it to the pier. By 11 AM we were ready to move the stringers. Other than the rope slipping off twice, everything went well. By lunchtime, we had the stringers back in place. After lunch we re-assembled the bridge quite rapidly and added a new ramp on the far end. After that we built a new stile nearby and piled some rocks around one end of the bridge.

Unfortunately, Hurricane Jeanne hit the following Tuesday and both the bridge and stile got washed out again.

**Sunday, September 26, 2004 8:00 AM
Saint Mary's Wilderness, Upper Loop**

Larry Austin (co-leader), Lois Smith (co-leader), Gary Hale, Charlie Scharnberg, Shelley Himel, Sara Emmerich & Diana Christopulos

We arrived at the trailhead around 9:20 a.m. to begin this hike. The hike combined four trails in the Upper Saint Mary's Wilderness to form a circuit hike. We descended the Mine Bank Trail which follows a beautiful creek with numerous small cascading waterfalls. Farther down the trail, we ran upon a large copperhead snake stretched across the trail. After we all had an opportunity to view the snake, the leader decided rather than try to go around it, the safer solution (for the hikers that is) would be to carefully pick it up with his trekking pole and gently toss it to the side. It did appear to sail through the air a bit however! After about 3 miles, the Mine Bank Trail ends at the junction of the Saint Mary's Trail. We proceeded north on the Saint Mary's Trail to Green Pond, a rare high mountain tarn, where we enjoyed lunch. Just past Green Pond, we picked up the Jeep Trail and followed it to where it intersects with the Bald Mountain Trail, our last leg of this hike. All hikers did a great job and seemed to enjoy this wilderness area.

**Sunday, September 26, 2004 1:00 PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob**

Dick Clark (leader), Linda Akers, Gene Downs, Joyce Fisher, Blake Mitnick, Stephanie Noel & Emory Richardson

We had a pleasant afternoon for our hike up to McAfee Knob. For some of the hikers, this was their first outing on the trail since the new relocation was opened earlier this year. If you haven't had the opportunity to give it a test drive so far, you owe it to

yourself to do so. The steep, rocky and eroded sections have been replaced by an excellent route with modest grades and solid footing.

The view from the cliffs was a bit hazy but not too bad. In spite of the almost-full parking lot, there weren't an overwhelming number of hikers on the summit.

On our return route, we headed down the old road that skirts the remains of the Johnson estate. Soon we reached the main fire road and had an easy and enjoyable walk back to 311.

Sunday, October 3, 2004 8:00 AM
Bearwallow Gap to Troutville (Rt. 11)

Laura Montague (leader), Kris Peckman (co-leader), Bob Peckman, Lois Smith, Linda King & Shelley Himel

This was the last 20 miler before Daylight Savings Time ended. It was a beautiful day with a hint of the leaves changing color. We met some interesting people along the way and had some nice chats. We delayed lunch until Curry Creek. We had a great time feeding the little fish bread crumbs and watching the Crawfish chase each other around.

Everyone finished together at US 11 in Troutville. It was a great day spent with great friends.

Sunday, October 3, 2004 1:00PM
Bearwallow Gap to Jennings Creek

Kenny Garrett (co-leader), Larry Austin (co-leader), Jesse Garrett, Lance Garrett, David Miller, Caryl Connolly, Carl Cornett, Stephanie Noel, Mary Gilbert, Maya Bohler, David Jackson & Norma Davenport

The afternoon started easier than usual due to Larry having already placed a vehicle at Jennings Creek. We loaded three cars and drove to Bearwallow Gap to start our Sunday afternoon stroll. The sky was overcast and the temperature was in the mid-70's, which made for a comfortable walk. We stopped for a break at Little Cove Mountain Shelter, and enjoyed a quick sit-down. The rain held off and everyone seemed to enjoy this fairly easy hike. The signs of the coming autumn changes were showing throughout the afternoon trek. Larry surprised all with a cooler of drinks and assorted snacks including home-made pumpkin cookies at the end of the hike. Everyone was happy, except for Lance when he fell into Jennings Creek while we were taking care of the car switch. Lots of laughter and some new friendships made for a great afternoon.

Saturday, October 9, 2004 8:00AM
Massie Gap Circuit Hike #1

The hike was listed for Saturday, but all the calls except one came Saturday night. The newspaper had the hike listed for Sunday. Hike cancelled!

Saturday, October 9, 2004
Andy Layne Trail Bridge Work Hike #2

Charles Parry, Dick Clark, Bob Simpson, Mervin Brower, Blanche Brower, Bob Stimson, Kenneth Granland, Fred Coughlan, Bill Gordge, Roger Holnback, Dana Helsley, Greg Foster, Heath Foster, Dave Cheslow, Kris Peckman, Homer Witcher & Therese Witcher

Since this was this the second time in two weeks that we had put this bridge back in place, we were getting pretty good at it. Hal wasn't able to make it this time, but we got his block and tackle. Again, most of the crew dismantled the bridge, while the rest of us got ready on the other side of the creek. We had to cut another skid and get the pulley blocks fastened to the same tree as before. This time I brought 3 rock-bars and Bill had a peavey. The stringers came across the stream and back up on the pier quite easily. Fortunately, the new ramp that we put in on the far side of the stream on the previous time was not damaged. The bridge went back together very quickly. About this time Homer and Therese arrived and agreed to put the new stile back in place, which had also washed out. By early afternoon, the projects were about done, but the bridge supports had somehow shifted and there was about a 10-inch gap between sections of the bridge. We left Fred and Dana to figure that out while the Witchers, the Browsers and Kris went over to repair the first bridge, which had also been damaged. I shuttled between the two projects, depending on who needed something. By mid-afternoon, we had both bridges in good shape. Kris and I had decided to drive over and check out the Trout Creek Bridge, which had also been damaged in Hurricane Jeanne. We were pleased to see that it still in place, but had tilted some as well as missing some decking and rail. I crawled under it to see what had happened and found a yellow jackets nest. I got out as quick as I could, but not quick enough. We decided that we needed to make a list of what was needed and come back at a later date to do the repairs. Bob, Kris and I went back on the 17th and were soon joined by Chase and J.R. Davidson, who helped us get it back together.

Hike Schedule

Going on a group hike can fulfill a number of worthwhile purposes. These include such things as physical conditioning, social interaction, the enjoyment of nature, and the thrill of reaching a spectacular viewpoint. The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club consistently tries to provide a wide range of hiking opportunities for people of all ages, interests and abilities. Guests are always welcome to join us.

For the most part, we rate our hikes as follows:

Easy – 3 to 5 miles; good trails or old roads; modest elevation changes.

Moderate – 5 to 8 miles; steeper trails which may be rough in places.

Strenuous – 8 miles and up; long hikes with extensive climbs and possible rough trails or bushwhacking.

Hikes which do not fall neatly into one of these categories may be rated **easy-moderate** or **moderate-strenuous**.

You may drive your own car to the trailhead if you wish. However, carpooling is encouraged to save gasoline and because trailhead parking may be limited. The hike leader is responsible for arranging such carpooling as may be required. While there is no fee to hike with the club, the indicated amount is to defray automobile expenses and should be given to the driver of your carpool.

You will need to call the leader to find out where the hiking group will be meeting. If you are new to hiking, the leader can also give advice about clothing, footwear, and equipment. If you are unfamiliar with the hike, the leader will be glad to answer your questions and help you evaluate whether or not it is suitable for you.

Sunday, January 9, 2005 8:00AM

Ferrier - Lick Branch - Price Mtn. Exploratory

10.0 miles, Strenuous, \$3.00 carpool fee
26 miles from Roanoke

Located in Craig County east of New Castle on the border of Botetourt County, the hike will follow the Ferrier Trail to Lick Branch Trail, then follow Lick Branch trail to top of Broad Run Mountain, following the ridge to Rt 606. Since this is a strenuous hike in mid-winter conditions, participants need to be in excellent condition. Carry extra warm clothing in case of emergency or to contend with icy winds on the ridge.

David Wickersham 774-0439
Gary Bible 977-2954

Sunday, January 9, 2005 1:00PM

Fort Lewis Mountain from Bradshaw Rd.

4.2 miles, Moderate, \$0.50 carpool fee
9 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Roanoke County.

Ed Wallace 540-774-0175
Mike Ferguson 344-8525

Sunday, January 16, 2005 8:30AM

Catawba Mountain Work Hike

Almost no miles, Moderate, \$0.50 carpool fee
6 miles from Roanoke

Catawba Mountain. Repair steps on the rock-bridges.

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Laurie Adkins 966-2811

Sunday, January 16, 2005 1:00PM

Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob as a Circuit Hike

7.0 miles, Moderate, \$0.50 carpool fee
6 miles from Roanoke

Located west of Salem in Roanoke County, the hike follows the Appalachian Trail to the fire-road crossing, past the old Johnson Farm location (chimney still standing), through the Devil's Kitchen, and back down the newly relocated section of trail. Extensive cliffs at the top afford unparalleled views of both the Catawba Valley and the city of Roanoke.

Linda Akers 776-1969
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, January 23, 2005 8:00AM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to North
Mountain (Rt. 311)

10.4 miles, Moderate-Strenuous, \$1.50 carpool
 9 miles from Roanoke

The hike starts in Botetourt County and follows the border of Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke, counties; it climbs North Mountain on the gently graded Catawba Valley Trail, which begins just opposite the Andy Layne Trail on Route 779. The rest of the hike is an up-and-down ridge walk, with views on both sides visible through the trees in winter.

Kris Peckman 366-7780
Kenny Garrett 890-8946

Sunday, January 23, 2005 1:00PM
Wolf Creek Greenway

3.5 miles, Easy, \$0.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

Located in Vinton. This hike uses one of the trails that make up the valley's expanding greenway system.

Lynn Bryant 343-2084
Georgia Gallaher 345-8700

Sunday, January 30, 2005 8:00AM
Lee Hollow (RT 621) to Trout Creek (RT
620) 113-Mile Hike # 7

8.8 miles, Moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee
 15 miles from Roanoke

AT hike located in Craig and a little bit of Roanoke County, the hike on Brush Mt. includes the Audie Murphy Monument, a tribute to the most decorated soldier of WWII, who died in a plane crash on this very mountain. This hike has a mile of road walk added because of the bridge out on 620.

Laura Montague 725-3682
Lois C. Smith 992-3701

Sunday, January 30, 2005 1:00PM
Trout Creek (Rt. 620) to Pickle Branch
Shelter

2.4 miles, Easy, \$1.00 carpool fee
 15 miles from Roanoke

Located in Craig County in the Jefferson National Forest just south on AT from Dragons Tooth in Millers cove.

Mervin & Blanche Brower 387-9732
Mary Gilbert 774-0330

Sunday, February 6, 2005 8:00AM
Crabtree Falls

5.8 miles, Moderate, \$5.50 carpool fee
 68 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Nelson County, and follows Crabtree Creek, with scenic overlooks at the five major cascades, which with a number of smaller ones, have a total fall of 1,200 feet.

Gary Bible 977-2954
Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637

Sunday, February 6, 2005 1:00PM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to Stone Coal
Gap

5.0 miles, Moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee
 11 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt and Craig Counties.

Don Hoke 563-2902
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, February 13, 2005 8:30AM
Trout Creek Work Hike

1.0 mile, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

Trout Creek Area: Work on a new switchback around a badly eroded section of trail about 0.3 mile north of Trout Creek.

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, February 13, 2005 1:00PM
Mill Mountain Loop

5.8 miles, Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee
 3 miles from Roanoke

This lollipop hike, located in Roanoke City, starts at the Star Trail parking lot in Roanoke where the trail is followed to the top of Mill Mountain. The hike continues down the old Mill Mountain road and then follows a network of trails that circle the mountain. Finally, hikers retrace the lower part of the Star Trail back to the parking lot.

Georgia Gallaher 345-8700
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, February 20, 2005 8:00AM
Ribble Trail, AT Loop

9.9 miles, Moderate-Strenuous, \$5.50 carpool fee
 71 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Giles County.

Kenny Garrett 890-8946
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, February 20, 2005 1:00PM
Chestnut Ridge Trail

5.4 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located 4 miles from Roanoke and one mile from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a 5.4-mile figure eight course around the Roanoke Campground behind Mill Mountain. The trail is well graded and surrounded by woods.

Linda Akers 776-1969
Lynn Bryant 343-2084

Sunday, February 27, 2005 8:00AM
Sandstone Ridge (Rt 624) to Trout Creek
(RT 620) (113-Mile Hike # 6 Plus)

8.0 miles, Strenuous, \$1.50 carpool fee
 15 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Roanoke and Craig County, and starts at the Rt. 624 road crossing. The hike climbs a rocky ridge with nice views of the valley below, before reaching Dragon's Tooth. Then it follows the ridge of Cove Mt. as it curves around Miller's Cove, finally descending past the Pickle Branch shelter to the suspension bridge over Trout Creek.

Kris Peckman 366-7780
Gary J. Hale 268-5283

Sunday, February 27, 2005 1:00PM
Hoop Hole Lower Loop

4.0 miles, Easy, \$2.00 carpool fee
 28 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, this hike makes a loop by following two delightfully wild streams: Hipes Branch and Stony Run. Both of them pass through high canyons and have plenty of cascades and deep pools. While there is little change in elevation, there are many stream crossings – some of which may be tricky if the water is high.

Mervin & Blanche Brower 387-9732
Joyce Fisher 362-1143

Sunday, March 6, 2005 8:00AM
Curry Gap (BRP) to Daleville (RT 220)
113-Mile Hike # 2

9 miles, Moderate-Strenuous, \$1.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt County.

Laura Montague 725-3682
Lois C. Smith 992-3701

Sunday, March 6, 2005 1:00PM
Falls Ridge

5.0 miles, Moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee
 20 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Montgomery County, southeast of Blacksburg in Falls Ridge Preserve. Part of a steep, rugged ridge that rises from the valley of the North Fork of the Roanoke River, Falls Ridge Preserve boasts a spring-fed travertine waterfall approximately 80 feet in height. Salem Fault runs through the preserve, dividing it into two different rock types: Precambrian limestone and shale/sandstone. The corresponding difference in soil types generates a diversity of vegetation, particularly wildflowers and smaller flora.

Linda Akers 776-1969
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, March 13, 2005 8:00AM
Spec Mines Trail Circuit via Blackhorse Gap

10.5 miles, Strenuous, \$1.00 carpool fee
 15 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt County just west of the Blue Ridge Parkway. It will utilize the Spec Mines Trail, AT between Montvale Overlook and Blackhorse Gap, and the Glenwood Horse Trail (USFS 634) with a side trip to the Spec Mines. The Spec Mines are about one mile (one-way) off the Glenwood Horse Trail and will require some bushwhacking. The initial climb from the Glenwood Horse Trail is quite strenuous for a 1/4 - 1/2 mile, so one must be in shape to do this. The site of the mines offers two open mines and a couple of old brick buildings along the creek. The mines have been closed since the early 1900's, so this is a trip back in time.

A. Larry Austin 254-2092
Terri McClure 375-2650

Sunday, March 13, 2005 1:00PM
Stewarts Knob

4.8 miles, Easy, \$0.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

Located in Vinton (Bedford County), this hike follows a new addition to the Greenway. This section will be an extension to the Wolf Creek Greenway. Starting just north of Rt. 24 it follows alongside the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Lynn Bryant 343-2084
David Sutton 540-774-0648

Sunday, March 20, 2005 8:30AM
Trout Creek Work Hike

1.0 mile, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

Trout Creek Area: Work on a new switchback around a badly eroded section of trail about 0.3 mile north of Trout Creek.

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, March 20, 2005 1:00PM
Cascades

4.0 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$4.50 carpool fee
 54 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike uses trails which run along both sides of Little Stony Creek, which ends near the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. Usually the hike will go up one side of the creek and come back on the other. The Forest Service charges a nominal fee (\$2.00) to park at the trailhead.

Kenny Garrett 890-8946
Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637

Sunday, March 27, 2005 8:00AM
Buffalo Mountain

4.0 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
 47 miles from Roanoke

Located in Floyd County in the vicinity of Mabry Mill, the hike goes to the summit of Buffalo Mountain with extraordinary views in all directions. The distinctive shape of Pilot Mountain in North Carolina is visible in the distance on a clear day. A network of unofficial trails lead to various points on the edge of the mountain's massive rock face.

Dick Clark 989-7053
Mary Gilbert 774-0330

Hike Reports (Continued)

Sunday, October 10, 2004 8:00AM Poverty Creek/Jacobs Ladder/Horse Nettle Trails of Pandapas Pond Area

We first met at the Hanging Rock parking lot where we proceeded to the Trail Head for over 40 miles of Trails in the Pandapas Pond area of the Jefferson National Forest. The parking lot is approx. 10 miles west of Blacksburg, on Rt.460. Turned out to be a lovely day for a fall hike. Sky was blue, Fall foliage nice and mid 70s Temp. This approx. 2 ½ hour hike consisted of various terrain, through various types of foliage from laurels to hard woods to pines. Parts were steep and rugged and parts were on old logging service roads. All went with out a glitch, at first, but the 1.2-mile steep climb up Jacobs Ladder gave us some laughs, after we all got back together finally. We divided into two groups before ascending to allow those who preferred to go faster to keep from waiting on the rest of us. We two co-leaders, Dave Sutton and myself, decided to stick with the two different groups and meet at a logging road at the top. Won't mention any names here, Ha,ha, but one of us accidentally ended up following the wrong trail and didn't end up at the same spot on top. After looking for each other and failing, both groups proceeded with the hike as originally planned. Fortunately, about a mile from the trail end we ran into each other and finished out the hike going by the pond, looking for beaver as one big happy family.

As they say, all is well that ends well!

Sunday, October 17, 2004 8:00AM Douthat State Park Hike # 2

Larry Austin (co-leader), Lois Smith (co-leader), Carl Cornett, Shelley Himel & Charlie Scharnberg

The weather for this hike was quite invigorating (clear skies, windy and chilly). We arrived at Douthat and commenced our hike at 8:50 a.m. You had to hold on to your hat with winds quite gusty. Didn't have to worry about wiping your brows either--it must have been about 40 degrees when we arrived. It did finally warm up to around 60 degrees by the time we completed the hike. The foliage was quite beautiful, and we had a number of nice views of the mountains in the park and in the distance. We also had some great views of the lake including one where we decided to lunch. This is a great state park for hiking as there are numerous circuit hike

opportunities combining the many well-maintained trails. We had some spectacular (calendar quality) Fall foliage scenes on the Beard's Gap Trail where the sun was hitting maple trees at just the right angle to heighten their splendor. We completed this hike before 2:00 p.m. and all appeared to really enjoy the day.

Sunday, October 17, 2004 1:00PM Falls Ridge

Linda Akers (co-leader) & Bobbie Stitche (co-leader), Neil McKinney, Nancy Utz, Mervin Brower, Kenny & Jesse Garrett, Brice Moon, Sue Scanlin, Mary Gilbert

It was an absolutely beautiful fall day for this hike in Montgomery County, past beautiful spring-fed waterfalls and an old kiln. This was a first-time visit for everyone except Bobbie, and everyone enjoyed the hike and plans to return. No wildlife encountered, except for the canine variety. Jesse & Brice enjoyed exploring some of the caverns evident in the rocks.

Sunday, October 24, 2004 8:30AM Catawba Mountain Work Hike

Charles Parry, Fred Coughlan, Dana Helsley, Bob Stimson, Don Hoke, Mervin Brower

Four of us met at the parking lot in a drizzly morning. After deciding that no one else was coming, we headed in with two trucks. We met Don about the time we parked. He was planning to hike to Daleville, but decided not to because of the weather. He offered to help us for half a day. We began where we left off the previous month and made good time as the grade was not very steep. We went back to the trucks for lunch and Don left soon after. However, Mervin soon arrived as a replacement. The weather started to improve and we saw the afternoons pass through around 2:30 on their way to the Knob. We quit around 4, having got about 100 yards of new trail dug.

Sunday, October 24, 2004 1:00PM Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob

Lois Smith (co-leader), Linda Akers (co-leader), Carl Cornett, Mary Gilbert, Nancy Utz, Fred Meyer, Laura Effel, Stephanie Noel, Chet Chandler & Gary Hale

The day was overcast and cool and we had rain before the hike which made the bridges and leaves slippery. We had a very interesting group and some that had not done this hike before. We made it to the top and the view was obstructed by fog. Chandler made the comment that if we waited it would clear up.

Almost as soon as he said that we had clearing and the view was good, not great, but good. This pleased the ones of us that had been there many times and wanted the hikers that had not to be able to see the beauty that we have seen.

We made our way down to the parking lot where we had snacks and fellowship. All appeared to have enjoyed the hike.

Sunday, October 31, 2004 10:00AM

Joint hike with the NBATC

Black Horse Gap to Salt Pond Road via 1930 AT

Dana Helsley (RATC co-leader), Peter Magyari (NBATC co-leader), David Wickersham (RATC co-leader), Gary Bible (RATC), Maya Bohler (RATC), Carl Cornett (RATC), Fred Coughlan (RATC), Mary Gilbert (RATC), Loretta Ortiz (NBATC), Tom Ramsey (NBATC), Andy Woody (NBATC)

A beautiful fall day graced this third annual, and now expanded, hike which follows the original pathway of the 1930 AT from Black Horse Gap to south of Curry Gap, utilizing original text and map from the 1934 "Paths in the Blue Ridge" guidebook. With the entire rediscovered portion of the original AT now pushing above seven miles, and with Curry Gap now only a waypoint of interest, this hike should be renamed to better reflect its routing. Additionally, the "moderate" hike description should be corrected to at least "moderate-strenuous" (if not too "strenuous") regardless of the miles, and especially due the considerable bushwhacking and blowdown negotiation involved with this walk through the woods.

Seven RATC members and four NBATC members traversed six miles of the seventy-plus-year-old trail (which has not had any maintenance in at least 55 years, either - Charles Parry please take note) in a little over four hours. Both the summits and ridges of Blue Knob and Washington Knob offered good views to the group this time, and these partially compensated for the significant tangles of blowdown found along those same ridge-tops, and the nests of briars (which drew some innocent blood) found when walking along the valley streambeds.

The sum effect was that nearly the entire group was in agreement that the required physical output felt more like twelve miles. And, as it was Halloween and the first day of one-hour-earlier sunsets, discretion (and the co-leaders' desire to avoid a hikers' mutiny) recommended that the final two miles and continued search for steel trail markers should be left for another day. Luckily, the group had not lost any of its participants when we miraculously stumbled upon the cars, so it ended as an early, but exertive, day. And a good time was had by all.

Sunday, October 31, 2004 1:00PM

Fenwick Mines Trails

Georgia Gallaher (leader), Joyce Fisher (co-leader), Lynne Jacoby & Zetta Campbell

The weather on Sunday was great for our hike, with blue skies and temperatures just right. Our group was small, but we had lots of good fellowship and conversations. Fenwick Mines Trail was disappointing though. All the rain that we have had this year caused the swamp area trail to be flooded. We went a short distance in and then had to turn around and come back out. We went back to the parking area and walked up the road to the other end of the Fenwick Mines area. We did some exploring up and down various side roads there and stopped in the picnic area for a break. All agreed even though the hike did not go as well as planned, we all enjoyed just being out on this beautiful day.

Sunday, November 7, 2004 8:30AM

Catawba Mountain Work Hike

Charles Parry, Laurie Adkins, Dick Clark, Mike Vaughn, Frank Di Ramio, Pam Di Ramio, Fred Coughlan, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Dana Helsley, Kris Peckman, Doug Miller, Brian Chisom, Matt Piper, Erin Taylor, Isabel Gamm, Blake Seitz, Sarah King, Katie Suehs, Zachary Rosner

What a beautiful day to work in a beautiful place. Doug is a photographer for the Roanoker Magazine, who joined us for part of the day. He took several shots of several of us raking and digging. After he finished, I shuttled him out. On the way we met the Roanoke College group coming in. Brian and I had arranged for them to carry out the remaining lumber from the old boy scout shelter, which they stacked by the road. I got back shortly before lunch time and did a little digging before our lunch break. We were entertained at lunchtime by

baseball trivia, but we soon realized that “Babe Ruth” was the answer to all of Dana’s questions. By quitting time we had completed about 500 feet of new trail and were within site of the end. On the way out we stopped to load the lumber in my truck. I had a full load on the way home with trail tools on top of the lumber. It was a good day’s work on a very nice November day.

**Sunday, November 7, 2004 1:00PM
Ferrier Trail**

Maurice Turner (co-leader), Joyce Fisher (co-leader), John Lynham, Charles Musgrove, Carl Cornett, H.R. Blankenship, May Bohler, Paul Blaicklock, Nancy Utz, Shelley Himel, Charlie Scharnberg, Sue Foy, Larry Austin, Shirley Thompson, Stephanie Noel, Lynne Jacoby, Joy Greer & Mary Gilbert.

The beautiful weather brought the hikers out today; the temperature was near 70 and sunny. We started on the Ferrier Trail at the forest service road; we encountered a number of hunters who had camped out at the stream crossing. Since this trail isn't well maintained, we encountered a number of blow-downs and the trail was narrow on the side hills making it slow going in places and also the dry leaves didn't help. We had a snack break at the intersection of Lick Run before we headed back down. The stream was flowing full with numerous crossings; the hurricanes had transformed the banks. There were a number of blow-downs on Lick Run side also. The afternoon sun's reflection on the stream was breathtaking as was the cascading water and the many pools along the hike.

The trail made its way down to the forest service road and it was a mile hike to the vehicles, making it somewhere over a 6 mile hike. It was getting dark as we headed to Orange Market.

**Sunday, November 14, 2004 8:00AM
Apple Orchard Falls-Glenwood Horse-AT-
Cornelius Creek Trails Circuit**

Larry Austin (co-leader), Terri McClure (co-leader), H. R. Blankenship, Gary Hale, Chet Chandler, Lois Smith, Charlie Scharnberg, Shelley Himel, Laura Montague

The weather for this hike was crystal clear and cool with the high's probably not getting out of the 40's at the hike location. This circuit hike ranks at the top for its grandeur. It offers three magnificent streams--North Creek capped by Apple Orchard

Falls, Overstreet Creek on the Glenwood Horse Trail with a cascading waterfalls and Cornelius Creek with its numerous small falls and pools of water. Sunset Field and Black Rock Overlook provided stunning views of the valleys and mountains to the west. We strolled through an open meadow east of the Parkway which was formerly the site of a youth camp for more than 40 years named Camp Kewanee prior to reaching the Glenwood Horse Trail. After reaching Floyd's Field on the Parkway, we enjoyed lunch in some warming sunshine prior to heading on to Cornelius Creek Shelter, the AT and Cornelius Creek Trail. A little adventure occurred on the Apple Orchard Trail with the temporary displacement of three hikers and one fleece jacket. All were able to be recovered without too much delay but resulted in extra mileage for a few. It did provide a good basis for laughter later on. This hike was a good challenge with its fairly steep climbs but all seemed to make it without too much damage. We completed the hike just prior to 3:00 p.m.

**Sunday, November 14, 2004 1:00PM
Lee Hollow (Rt. 621) to Niday Shelter**

Georgia Gallaher (co-leader), Mary Gilbert (co-leader), Charles Musgrove, Nancy Utz, Aaron Eanes, Lynne Jacoby, Hooper(dog) & Joy Greer.

The weather was perfect again for a hike. When we reached the parking lot off Route 612 there were several hunters' trailers parked there, but we still had plenty of room for our two cars. The trail looked different with all the leaves covering it. We had to keep a close eye on the white blazes or where they were not visible look for indentations in the leaves. We reached the Niday Shelter and took a short break there. Lynne's dog Hooper enjoyed running back and forth during our hike. When the group reached the parking lot again they took a look around the trailers. They found the remains of a deer that had been cut up. Hooper rolled in the mess and made the ride back home very scented.

**Sunday, November 21, 2004 8:00AM
Petites Gap to James River (Rt.501)**

Kenny Garrett (co-leader), Kris Peckman (co-leader), Bob Peckman, H.R. Blankenship, Charlie Scharnberg, Shelley Himmel, Carl Cornett, Don Hoke, Lois Smith, Laura Montague, Jeanette McConville (NBTC member), Kirk McGuire (member from early 70's)

The weather was unseasonably warm and the sky was a little overcast as this dozen of hardy hikers hit the trail northbound at Petites Gap. The climb to the 3,073-foot peak of Highcock Knob was enough to get everyone's heart pumping. We then started a very steep and rocky descent for approximately a half mile over wet leaves. Several people slipped on this part, including the graceful leader. I had to remind myself, it's not the fall, but how you look as you're doing it. After much laughter, we continued our downhill stroll at a more pleasant angle. We stopped at the intersection of the Belfast Trail for our lunch break, and then continued losing elevation. The views of Balcony Falls and the James River as it flowed toward Snowden were spectacular. We took another break at Matt's Creek Shelter, before finishing the last couple of miles of flat trail along the water. We finished our walk at the James River footbridge at the elevation of 678 feet. Several wildflowers were observed blooming along the trail near the James River (very unusual in the middle of November). I believe everyone truly enjoyed this autumn hike in the James River Face Wilderness.

Sunday, November 21, 2004 1:00PM
Sunset Field to Apple Orchard Falls

Hike was canceled due to uncertainty about weather conditions on Parkway and received only two calls about an hour or two before hike time.

Sunday, November 28, 2004 1:00PM
Mill Mountain Loop

Carl Cornett (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Maurice Turner, Bobbie Stitche, Mary Lou Gaminde, Gene Downs, David Bordett, Nancy Utz, Mary Gilbert, Mervin Brower, Blanche Brower, Lynn Jacoby, Charles Musgrove, Shirley Thompson, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman & Dana Helsley

We had a great turnout for this hike, 17 hikers in all. The weather was clear, however the wind proved to be downright chilly as we waited in the parking lot for everyone to arrive. The small parking lot soon filled quickly and several had to park alongside the access road.

Upon reaching the star, H.R. Blankenship pointed out an old stump wherein we found a small plastic box with a web address www.letterboxing.org on it. Inside the box was a rubber stamp (in this case a star, for the Roanoke Star). You use this stamp to stamp your collection book. You then use your stamp (you design your own and carry it with you) to stamp the book or

paper in the box. The web address gives you the procedure along with a list of interesting box locations around the United States. A great way to see interesting places in America and prove you've been there! Thanks to HR for the information.

Sunday, December 5, 2004 8:00AM
Punchbowl (BRP) to James River (Rt.501)

Laura Montague (leader), Joyce Fisher (assistant leader), H.R. Blankenship, John Miller, Jennifer Schaeffer, Lois Smith, Kristin Peckman, Bob Peckman & Diana Christopulos

This hike provides fantastic views of the James River Gorge. With the leaves off the trees the views were repeated throughout the hike. The weather was wonderful. We all said we had summer weather with winter views. A warm welcome to our visitor, Jen Schaeffer of Christiansburg. It was a great hike with great friends.

Sunday, December 5, 2004 1:00PM
Hoop Hole Lower Loop

Mary Gilbert (leader), Linda Akers (assistant leader), Neil McKinney, Bill & Lynne Jacoby, Charles Musgrove, Ann Rogers & Bobbie Stitche

Perfect day for this hike - sunny, clear skies, 53 degrees. Creek crossings were a challenge -- those rocks were slippery! Ann soon found that her "muck lucks" were NOT waterproof. Squish, squish. Bill earned many "stars" (he was hoping for a club patch!) for helping pull everyone across safely. THANKS Bill.

This is such a beautiful hike -- we should do it more often!

Thank you for the cards, phone calls,
 and well wishes after my father's death.
 Friends like you have made this difficult
 time a little easier to deal with. See you
 on the trail, soon.
 Sincerely,
 Stephanie Kent

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Annual Dinner and Business Meeting

Reservation Form (Must be received by March 1st)

Mail to:

Carolyn McPeak
71 Viewmont Trail
Hardy, VA 24101

Please reserve _____ places at the RATC Annual Dinner Meeting

What is your email address? _____

What year (make a guess!) did you join RATC? _____

Please make nametags as follows:

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ (\$14.00 per person). Please make checks **payable to RATC**

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

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Family Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> New 1 year \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> New 2 year \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Renew 1 year \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Renew 2 year \$30 |
| Individual Member | <input type="checkbox"/> New 1 year \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> New 2 year \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Renew 1 year \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Renew 2 year \$20 |
| Make checks payable to RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282 | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$500 |

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CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Annual Banquet
Saturday, March 12 – 6 PM

WORK HIKES

Sunday, January 16 - 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain

Sunday, February 13 - 8:30 AM
Trout Creek

Sunday, March 20 - 8:30 AM
Trout Creek

Hike Scheduling

Contact Don Nulph
774-8618 – Nulph-d@cox.net

BOARD MEETINGS

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

Monday, January 10, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Blanche & Mervin Brower

Monday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Bob Peckman

Monday, March 21, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Dick Clark

**The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
The Appalachian Trail Conference
and a member of The Nature Conservancy**