

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Winter 2011

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.

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Potluck Banquet & Business meeting – March 12th

WORK HIKES

Saturday, January 22 - 8:30 AM
Fullhardt Knob Shelter

-
Sunday, February 20 - 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain

-
Sunday, March 20 - 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain

Hike Scheduling

Contact Mike Vaughn
992-1350 – mikeva999@yahoo.com

BOARD MEETINGS

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

Monday, January 17, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by *Merv & Blanche Brower*

Monday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by *Judy & Dick Clark*

Monday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by *Bob & Kris Peckman*

If you have email and did not get a link to the online Blazer in color from the RoanokeATC Yahoo Group, please share your email address with me and I will include you. (bob@peckmanjazz.com)

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John Miller still needs 14 excursion leaders and 6 co-leaders for the ATC Biennial Conference. He also still has 10 more time slots to be filled at the Excursion Desk and 14 time slots for the departure area. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these please contact John at 540-375-3250 or john.miller591@comcast.net for details. Remember the admission price is being paid by the conference for the excursion leaders.

Notice to Trail Maintainers:

If you need either new or replacement signs for your section of Appalachian Trail, then contact Hal Cantrill at hacantrill35@comcast.net or 540-387-2347. Hal makes the routed wood information signs for the Roanoke Trail Club.

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

<i>Michael Beda</i>	<i>Jason (Jay) Harcum</i>	<i>Mike Perdue</i>
<i>Sheila Barnhart</i>	<i>Carina & Bill Hughes</i>	<i>Gene Rose</i>
<i>Brian & Kelly Bucola</i>	<i>Bob Langford</i>	<i>Walter Shroyer</i>
<i>Chip Donahue Family</i>	<i>Emily Meissel</i>	<i>Bernie & Mary Smith</i>
<i>John Goodwin</i>	<i>Greg Perdue</i>	<i>Vicki Wells</i>

And we thank you for making donations for the care of the Trail.

<i>David Cullen</i>	<i>John Goodwin</i>	<i>Reinhard O'Neill</i>
<i>John Everett, Jr.</i>	<i>Christopher Lynch</i>	<i>Vicki Wells</i>

And for donations to the Club in memory of James (Jim) Edward Womack.

<i>Michael & Jane Kneisley</i>	<i>Harold & Harriet Little</i>	<i>Harriette Powell</i>
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We look forward to meeting you soon: hiking on the trail, at work, social event, or a board meeting.

Bob Blankenbaker

Editor's Report

The board is in a state of shock about Charles Parry's condition. Charles is still at Lewis-Gale but continues to deteriorate. Although the results of the brain biopsy are still not available, the doctors continue to offer no hope for recovery. He is in a semi-comatose state and has reached the point where he is considered to be almost brain-dead. Please do not call or visit... please.

Charles was physically and intellectually a giant. He loved his wife, math, and building trail in that order. He was also a virtuoso with a canoe paddle. He has left a very large footprint on the AT, on the club, and on our lives. Charles was the most compassionate man I have ever known. I use the word was, even though he is still alive, because he is no longer the powerhouse that we know.

While there is a giant void, the Club will go on. David Jones, who has been assisting Charles, has taken over the responsibilities of trail supervisor. But Charles did much more than that. He was our encyclopedia. He knew and loved all our trail neighbors and understood their problems. Trail busting was only part of what he did.

In honor of Charles, all the photos in this issue will be from the last three work hikes. Some include Charles. We thought he was on the road to recovery, but it appears that is not to be. The best way we can honor Charles is to carry on the work of the RATC, to which he gave 34 years.

Bob Peckman

Hike Reports

Sunday, September 19, 2010 – 8:00AM Pearis Mountain/Angel's Rest Stone-Steps Workhike

Dick Clark, Matt Gentry, Duncan Hollar, David Jones, David "Speaker" Keegan (Southbound Thru Hiker), Michael Lasecki, Vince Mier, Charles Parry, Alan Simpson

"Big Rock, Moving Up Hill," Part II—When we finished our August work week with Konnarock, Charles Parry was imploring the remaining four RATC trail workers to use the two pry bars, the two picks and four tired bodies to simply move one big, massive rock uphill to the AT.



And as usual, when the day was done, Charles had his way, worked his magic, or whatever it is that gets feeble people to move big, massive rocks. Lo and behold, returning to the worksite a month later, the rock was still there beside the trail, waiting. Now all that was needed was to get the rock up on the trail treadway, turn it around, excavate the dirt under it and place it—simple. Fortunately, after the August workhike, word of the big rock had spread through the RATC and on this September day an eager group was ready to get the job done.



However one big, massive rock does not make a set of rock steps; we only had one step on a ten-yard long steep section. The reason why we coaxed that big, massive rock uphill was because at this specific location there were few adequate rocks for steps. So, part of the group worked on setting the first rock in place, and the remaining workers fanned out to find some more big, massive rocks. And looking downhill, several candidates were identified. A prod or two with a rock bar usually gave an indication whether or not a rock could be moved—if it is not bedrock it can be moved—HA! With lots of work, several big, massive rocks, and many small rocks, by late afternoon another fine set of rock steps became a section of the pathway from Georgia to Maine.



**Sunday September 19, 2010 1:00PM
Curry Gap to Fulhardt Knob Shelter**

Dave Sutton (leader) Fred Walters and Kujo (canine), Karen Callahan, Zetta Campbell.

Although there is no sign designating it as Curry Gap on the Parkway, the location is 4.5 miles northwest of the intersection of US 460 and the Parkway. The hike begins up a slight incline on Salt Pond Road, which is mainly in the shade after 3PM. The temperature felt like it was near 90F, but it was nevertheless a nice hike to the shelter on the AT. Fred has volunteered to oversee this portion of the AT and has done a great job keeping up with maintenance. There are a few areas of pine bark beetle infestation. Fred also pointed to the chestnut blighted trees in the area. As we approached the cars, a motorcycle zipped past us on Salt Pond Road. It was a good hike as we made it back to the park point about 5:15PM

**Sunday, September 25/26, 2010 8:00AM
Catawba Mtn. (Rt. 311) to Daleville (Rt. 220)
113-Mile Hikes 3 & 4
Overnight Backpack**

Cancelled, no response

**Sunday, October 3, 2010 8:00AM
Bearwallow Gap (Rt 43) to Troutville (Rt 11)**

Linda King & Kenny Garrett (leaders), John Merkwon, Steve Bowles, Sandra Cothran, Rushdat Hale

It was a cold, windy, cloudy day; in other words, a perfect day for hiking 19.5 miles! This is a wonderful hike. If you've never hiked it and are up for the challenge, you should. Just do not believe our hike master's description that it is "mainly level ridgeline hiking with one long ascent. . ." this hike has some wind-sucking climbs! You will discover muscles you didn't know you had, and they will scream at you!

We had a great hike with a great group of brave and hearty hikers. We were glad to be able to say that, once again, we had been able to hike almost 20 miles and survived -- to eat pizza without guilt!

**Saturday, October 9, 2010 9:30AM
Roanoke River Greenway (Roanoke City)**

Diana Christopulos and Mark McClain (leaders), Reinhard O'Neill, Cheryl Crowell, Bill Modica, Frank Dieter, Mary Innes, Sherry Kessel, Patricia Kelly, Pat Cousins, Chuck Walz, Anna Milena Walz, Dan Crawford.

What a glorious day for a hike! The group met in Wasena Park and headed towards Mill Mountain, where Mark explained future plans for this stretch of the Greenway. Progress was easy, and we detoured a little to visit the new bridge near Carilion and to check out the former Victory Stadium site and the new Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine.

The state had recently stocked the Roanoke River with trout, so we saw many fishermen along the way, as well as hikers, bikers and runners.

These new Greenway hikes focus on links between the walk and local destinations such as restaurants and farmer's markets. We arrived at our lunch destination, Fork in the Alley, a little before the 11 AM opening time and relaxed outdoors in patio seating. Chili, salads, pizza and assorted beverages rewarded this effort.

After the nice break, the return trip was almost effortless. We almost lost a few hikers to the Pagan Pride Picnic in the Park, but everyone made it safely to the parking lot.

For future reference, this hike could probably start 30 to 60 minutes later, but it was nice to finish while it was still cool out.

**Sunday, October 10, 2010 1:00PM
Sunset Field to Petites Gap**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders), Clayton Cabiness, Cheryl Penn & 2 dogs, Maurice Turner, Andy Robinson, Carina Hughes and Pam Welsh.

The hike started from the parking lot behind KFC on route 460. We organized the car switch at the parking lot to leave one car at Sunset Field and then drive on to Petites Gap. We stopped at Peaks of Otter for a pit stop and then drove to Sunset Field where we left one car, then drove to Petites Gap where we started our hike. We met one hiker here who was waiting for people to come pick him up as he had injured his ankle. The weather was in the 70's and clear and sunny. We started off at a brisk pace and one of our new members started to have problems. She rested for a while and was able to continue. We slowed down our pace then and she was able to complete the hike. The views from the overlooks were very grand on such a clear day and people up there for the first time enjoyed them very much. At the Thunder Ridge shelter we met an overnight hiker who was doing a hike around the area. We made it off the trail at 6:30 pm.

**Sunday, October 17, 2010 8:00AM
Big Horse Gap Stone Steps Work Hike**

Michael Beda, Steve Burt, Dick Clark, Duncan Hollar, Teresa Hollow, David Jones, Michael Lasecki, Charles Parry, Mike Vaughn

Fall had arrived. Leaving the vehicles at Big Horse Gap on Sugar Run Mountain everyone was covered in layers of fleece, pile, flannel or wool. Our goal was to complete rock steps that had been started a year earlier. A quarter mile into the woods the AT traversed a rock pile. With the white paint blazes guiding one's eye you could pick a vague pathway through these rocks.



Instead of having to find and move rocks to construct steps, this project was to rearrange the jumble of rocks to provide a better path. Rock bars, leather gloves and sledge hammers aided the hands that hefted, flipped and rearranged the rocks. The effort stoked the internal furnaces, and layers of fleece, pile, flannel and wool were taken off and set aside.



This process is a cooperative between “the plan” and how the rocks and land actually fit together. You step back, observe, discuss which rock goes where and to which side of a tree you will go, and finally decide the best route to follow. Then you start moving rocks, put one in place then move two rocks to allow the next. But, that rock does not fit, so you move another, flip it to the opposite side and somehow somehow the puzzle starts to fit. Grins and encouraging words keep the path going. Then

pausing, you step back, observe to see progress. But the rocks did not follow the plan, and so we laugh, and turn our attention to the next ten feet to find the best route there. Repeating this process again and again, by day’s end a look at the rocky jumble reveals a new pathway.



**Sunday, October 17, 2010 8:00AM
Whetstone Ridge**

John Merkwan (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant),
Bob Peckman, H.R. Blankenship, Carina Hughes

Official distance on this hike was 11.3 miles with all hikers enjoying after-hike treats within 6 hours of starting hiking. It was beautiful day to hike. The second half of the hike was true to the description with many ups and downs, but each up was rewarded with a magnificent view of two valleys – one on each side. Many/most leaves had already fallen, enhancing the views and also making the trail much easier going as this is a Forest Service trail and most of the overgrowth had withered away after finishing its growing season for the year. Something a little different on this hike is a deer stand smack dab on the trail. Carina scaled the ladder to the top in order to check it out but no deer were in sight – just us hikers although we did see two deer early on. The last item of note was a lizard (at least that is what I will call it) discovered on the back of one of our hikers headed south toward that opening at the small of her back into her pants. I would have been a little bit excited but our lizard carrier remained calm as could be and even enjoyed some after hike snacks with Lizzy who had scurried around to the front and seemed to be comfortably resting on her thigh.

**Sunday, October 24, 2010 8:00AM
Ribble Trail, A. T. Loop**

Mike Vaughn (leader), Carl Cornett, Carina Hughes, Ivy Lidstone, Mike Marinos, Fred Meyer, John Merkwan

We started on the trail close to 10:00 a.m. after a 70-mile drive from Roanoke. This section of the trail is located in Bland County, near the southernmost part of the section of the AT maintained by our club. This hike is a 10-mile loop. We hiked it counter-clockwise. The first three miles is flat and goes along Dismal Creek. We then started the steep 1,800 foot climb up Sugar Run Mountain. We eventually reached an overlook and stopped for lunch. Most of the leaves were gone at this elevation; however the views of the Wilburn Valley and Pearis Mountain were great. During our lunch break, Carl told us about the trekking trip he and two other club members had just taken to Nepal. He had just gotten back the previous evening from the trip. He certainly is a dedicated hiker! After lunch we continued our ridgetop walk and then started our steep descent off of the mountain on the Ribble Trail. The Ribble Trail is little-used and is difficult to follow in places. We all made it safely back to our cars and back to Roanoke by 5:30.

**Sunday, October 24, 2010 11:00AM
Wolf Creek Greenway**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Georgia Gallagher, Marianne Demkó, Cheryl Crowell, Jimmy Whitney and canine friend Boomer

As (bad) luck would have it, after giving out directions to the meeting place over the phone, this leader herself got lost on the way there and arrived late. My apologies to those who gave up on me and those who kept waiting.

Finally on our way, we ran into Lynn Bryant and friends. As you may or (if you're new to this area) may not know, Lynn and Peggy and many other RATC members had been instrumental in getting this part of the Greenway system developed. They did a wonderful job there. Thank You!

It was a gorgeous day to be on any trail: perfect temperature, sun shining, and leaves turning to soon reach their fall finest. And a most congenial group to share in the enjoyment. What more could you ask for? The six of us had a good time taking it all in and are looking forward to our next outing.

**Sunday, October 31, 2010 8:00AM
Glenwood Horse Trail/AT/Sulphur Spring Loop**

John Merkwan (leader), Fred Meyer (assistant), Kris & Bob Peckman, Carina Hughes, Ivy Lidstone, Jill Jones, Carl Cornett, H.R. Blankenship, Dan Phlegar and Sage.

This Halloween hike did begin with a sign. I'm not sure if it was an occult sign, but a big white sow stood alongside the road near the trailhead. The sun's reflection off of her white bristles in the crisp morning air seemed to me as an aura of tranquility or was it a sign of pending doom? Time would only tell what fate awaited our happy band of hikers. Ten of us started the hike at 9:20 with a ½ mile road march down Petite's Gap Road. At that point we jumped the guardrail and headed down the embankment to cross Elk Creek and scale up the other side to intersect with the Glenwood Horse Trail (GHT). The crossing went well but hikers were challenged in a demanding performance of the dry foot ballet as we slowly made our way across Elk Creek. We then proceeded on the GHT. This section is not used very often and sometimes follows an old road trace and sometimes does not. You might see a marker or you might not. All was going well until a blow-down blocked the trail and the trail we were following disappeared under the blow-down.

Everyone was looking at me – Where was the trail? Where should we go? – up the hill? – down the hill? Being the fearless hike leader I timidly pointed and mumbled “This way”, which turned out to be the wrong way when we reached some no-go terrain. At that point we bushwhacked up the hill and then up some more and finally up a little more and came across a road trace. Not having a better option I declared this to be “the trail” and we proceeded deeper into the wilderness. After 10 minutes we came across a discarded oil can, circa 1950, which closes this part of the tale. I recognized the can from the scouting trip I had made in the summer; I knew we were back on the right trail!

Now having etched the “memorable” component of the hiking experience in everyone's mind, the “marvelous” awaited us as we experienced many outstanding leaf-off views as we hiked the AT. The group was in good spirits as they elected to extend the hike and tempt fate again with my navigational abilities with a two-mile loop to the helicopter landing pad where you have a view of two different valleys. Our last stop was at a viewing point off of the Sulphur Spring trail for one last marvelous view of the mountains and valleys between before heading down the trail to finish a roughly estimated 10 miles by 3 PM. We did meet a pair of thru-hikers on the AT, Ragamuffin and MooMoo, who were newlyweds hiking the AT on their honeymoon. I guess the white sow turned out to be a good sign after all.

**Sunday, November 7, 2010 8:00AM
Punchbowl Overlook (BRP) to
Long Mountain Wayside (Route 60)**

Kris Peckman (leader), Lois Smith (assistant), H.R. Blankenship, Bob Peckman

We were a cozy group of four, unable to imagine what could have kept other hikers away on such a spectacular fall day. Colorful leaves carpeted the ground, but many remained on the trees, shimmering in the slanting sunlight. We started from the Blue Ridge Parkway, milepost 51.7, descending Rice Mountain at a quick pace to keep warm. Near the bottom is an old sign noting the Forest Service's preservation of old timber in 450 acres around the sign. We apparently missed a 5-foot diameter yellow poplar that was noted in Lois's guidebook. The trail, which used to cross right over the dam, now skirts the Lynchburg reservoir by a wide margin and sports two very solid bridges. The trail does give nice views of the reservoir from a distance. We had lunch by the bridge over sparkling Brown's Creek, then walked past rock walls and a chimney from the community of freed slaves who farmed this little valley in the early 1900s. We finished the hike in only 5 hours and drove home on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**Sunday, November 7, 2010 1:00PM
A.T., Black Horse Gap to Curry Gap
113 Mile Hike #1**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders), Roy Wilson, David Jones and dog

The hike started from the parking lot behind KFC on route 460. The weather was a bright sunny day with a temperature of 45°. We stopped at the shelter for a snack and rest where we met one section hiker and one through hiker. The through hiker was going to stop for the winter and continue on in the spring. We encountered 4 blow downs and removed two of them. There was something going on with the blazes as some had been scratched out. We finished our hike before it got dark, which was our goal.

**Saturday, November 13, 2010 11:00AM
Murray Run Greenway**

Diana Christopulos & Mark McClain (leaders), Suzanne Ashley, Rudy & Karen Vietmeier, Mary Rhoades, Sheila & Rick Barnhart, Caralee Eicher, Chuck & Anna Milena Walz, Zetta Campbell, Diane Christensen.

We had a glorious sunny day for this easy 4-mile walk on Roanoke's most natural greenway path. Starting at the Grandin Road trailhead in Shrine Hill Park, we enjoyed fabulous fall colors in the many wooded sections of the trail, interspersed with city parks, neighborhoods, schools, and culminating at VWCC campus where we got a great view of Mill Mountain in its fall splendor. We returned to the start via an auxiliary trail that cuts over to Murray Run and Fishburn Park. It was the first time on this greenway for some, and the walk attracted several non-members who eagerly accepted RATC membership forms. Following our hike, most of the group strolled over to All Sports Cafe (right next to the trailhead parking) and enjoyed a filling lunch to the accompaniment of the WVU fan club's cheers for the Mountaineers who were crushing Cincinnati on the big screen.

**Sunday, November 14, 2010 8:00AM
Big Horse Gap Work Hike
Pearis Mountain/Angel's Rest
Honoring Charles**

Steve Burt, Matt Gentry, Neville Harris, David Jones, Lori Jones, Michael Lasecki, Ivy Lidstone, Kris Peckman

The scheduled workhike was for building rock steps near Big Horse Gap. Sad news that our long-time trail supervisor and friend Charles Parry was hospitalized and in poor condition made thoughts of trail work seem a bit trivial. However, in discussing Charles's condition with others who were planning to participate in the work hike, it was suggested that as an honor to Charles we needed to be out on the trail. So, we decided to go work on Charles's section, Pearis Mountain.



Since this summer's Konnarock crew had worked here, we were able to move quickly up the mountain. However, it did not take long for little tasks to begin to appear. A small set of rock steps were being by-passed so our group dispersed to the hillside and soon a pile of rock gargoyles filled the eroded area. A large blowdown was left for our return trip—no chainsaw-Charlie was here today.



Near the top of the mountain, the trail switchbacks to gain the summit. Several of these were being shortcutted, so logs, rocks, and brush were used to block the way and keep the hikers on the trail. We had lunch at Angel's Rest. Though we had only covered two miles of trail it was time to start our return to the cars. Work continued on blocking the rogue pathways that cut the switchbacks.



At the first of the two blowdowns encountered on our hike up the mountain, packs were dropped and various handsaws were extracted. Several people took turns pushing and pulling the manual saws. Finally, several people just grabbed the log and pushed and pulled until the log snapped. And that effort ended our day.



We skipped the next blowdown, as we proceeded down the mountain chatting and discussing Charles. At the cars David Jones realized that he had forgotten the cold drinks—traditionally we gather at the cars and have a soda before we leave. Charles always had the drinks; we miss you Charles...

**Sunday, November 21, 2010 8:00AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Dragon's
Tooth Parking 113-Mile Hike # 5**

Fred Walters (leader) with K-9 Cujo, Rushdat Hale (assistant), David Jones with K-9 Sadie, Karen Callahan, H. R. Blankenship, Carina Hughes, Maya Bohler, Rhonda Prillaman, Bob & Kris Peckman, Fred Meyer, Ivy Lidstone with K-9 Ekko

The 8.9 mile hike started with absolutely perfect weather conditions for a fall hike. Clear skies with temperatures in the high 40's forecasted to rise into the 60's, very low humidity and a mild westerly breeze. Our group of 12 hikers and 3 K-9s (Ekko, Sadie & Cujo) trekked along the sawtoothed ridgeline of Catawba Mountain enjoying the endless vistas found on this hike. All said, just a gorgeous day to be out and about hiking with a great group.

**Sunday, November 21, 2010 1:00PM
Read Mountain Trail**

John Miller (leader), Georgia Gallaher, M. L. Earles, Clayton Cabiness, Don Dennehy, Diane Longman, Chris Coulson, Shelley Fairchild, Pamela Clement, Denise Tuttle, Sheri Custer, Charles Divers, Patricia Taylor, Bill Modica, Cheryl Crowell, Joanne Edmunds, David Bowers (and Catcher), and Margarita Cubas.

It was a great afternoon for a hike with temperatures in the 60's and lots of sunshine. I guess Catcher was the co-lead since he and Mayor Bowers led the large group up the trail and I swept. The views were a bit hazy but good none the less. We made good time to the summit at Buzzards Rock and ate snacks and chatted. Mayor Bowers requested that the blue "VIEW" signs be taken down in that people should be able to find their own views. The trip down was tricky since the leaves were covering rocks intent on tripping people. We made it back to the parking area with only minor injuries. Everyone said it was a good hike, and I enjoyed it.

**Sunday, November 28, 2010 1:00PM
A.T., Bearwallow Gap to Black Horse Gap**

Kenny Garrett & Rushdat Hale (leaders), Lance Garrett, H.R. Blankenship, Maya Bohler, Roy Wilson, and guests: Clayton Cabiness, Sarah Cuthbertson, Dawn Lamb, A.H. McPeak and A.J. McPeak

What an amazing turnout for a clear cool late autumn day. We had a great melting pot of hikers with quite a few guests. This hike going from Bearwallow Gap south to Black Horse Gap on the A.T. had eleven hikers wanting to walk off the effects of Thanksgiving Day a few days before. The sky was clear and the wind was fairly light as the temperatures hit a high of 50 degrees before falling as the sun set slowly in the west. I truly enjoyed the 'melting pot' of this diverse group as we enjoyed walkers from Scotland, Nigeria, Switzerland, Florida, North Carolina, and throughout the greater Roanoke area. And the leaders may have pushed a little hard, but we finished this 8-mile afternoon hike shortly before dark. I believe a great time was had by all.

**Saturday, December 4, 6:00PM Holiday
Potluck Dinner**

The dinner was a smash; we ate like pigs. RATC potlucks are the best food in the world. I guess we all love being healthy and we love to make and eat good food. It was a delicious feast. The second dessert was Mark's and Diana's walking the Yorkshire Dales and North Sea Coast England program.

**Sunday, December 5, 2010 8:00AM
A.T., Petites Gap to James River
Fullhardt Knob**

Lois Smith and Maya Bohler (leaders), Carl Cornett, Larry Austin, Hugh Hall & Rascal our 4-legged friend.

Due to the weather we changed the hike location from Petites Gap-James River Foot Bridge to Fullhardt Knob. We met in Daleville and made the short commute to the trail head where Larry met us. We made the trek up the mountain in record time due to the cold wind and snow-covered ground. At the shelter we had a short break and made the trip back to the parking lot.

The snow along with the sun shining made for a beautiful day to hike. We all enjoyed the hike and company of each other. All agreed it was good to get out even with the cold wind blowing.

**Sunday, December 5, 2010 11:00AM
Mill Mountain Loop**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Anne Gosling, Rita Krasnow and Lola (dog), Trish Webb, Fred Gorrell

The first snow of the season caused three other callers to change their minds, but it actually wasn't the snow that turned out to affect this hike; no, it was the wind. Oh, was it blustering at times, especially when we were at the Star! (Here's a tip: The restrooms near the Star are heated.) The view over the sunny valley was crystal clear; still, none of us wanted to stay there long due to the wind.

Our group was a congenial bunch and stayed together for the entire hike. On the way down, there was quite a stretch of ice on the upper part of Prospect Rd. and we walked gingerly on bare spots and snow-covered leaves to avoid falls. The restored bridge and toll booth on Prospect Rd. were duly admired by those of us who had seen them in need of repair if not near collapse in the past.

As soon as we were on the Monument Trail, we were protected from the howling wind and took that opportunity to have a snack break before completing the hike.

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.

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.

The club is always looking for experienced hikers to help lead club hikes. If you know of someone that you think would be a good hike leader, or wish to nominate yourself, please contact Mike Vaughn at 540-992-1350 or email mikeva999@yahoo.com.

**Saturday, January 1, 2011 9:00AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob
and Potluck Picnic**

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

Located west of Salem in Roanoke County, the hike follows the Appalachian Trail up and back. Extensive cliffs at the top afford unparalleled views of both the Catawba Valley and the city of Roanoke. Hike from 311 to McAfee's Knob and have a picnic lunch in the Devil's Kitchen. Bring anything devilish you can think of for a potluck picnic. Please call the leaders as early as possible so we can be sure we have enough supplies
Dan Phlegar 389-1783
Mike Vaughn 992-1350
or email..... mikeva999@yahoo.com

**Sunday, January 2, 2011 1:00PM
Falls Ridge**

5.0 miles, Moderate, \$2.00 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.

Sue Scanlin 989-0497
or email..... scanlin@verizon.net
Karen Callahan..... 540-961-0640

**Saturday, January 8, 2011 11:00AM
Roanoke River Greenway –Eastern End**

6.0 miles, Easy, no carpool fee - Roanoke

Walk the popular Roanoke River Greenway from its eastern Roanoke City terminus to Rivers Edge Park, with a side trip for lunch at Fork in the Alley, then return to the starting point (parking area near Brownlee & Bennington). We may see the beginning of work to extend the Roanoke River Greenway around the wastewater treatment plant and the Tinker Creek Greenway connector bridge.

Diana Christopulos..... 387-0930
Mark McClain 355-6526
or email..... mcclainmark@comcast.net

**Sunday, January 9, 2011 8:00AM
Cove Mtn. and Little Cove Mtn. Circuit**

8.2 miles, Strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee
23 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, this hike offers creek side walking along a branch of Cove Creek, a stop at Little Cove Mountain Shelter and a view from a rock formation just a few hundred feet north of shelter.

Dave Wickersham..... 774-0439
John Merkwon..... 904-2299

**Sunday, January 16, 2011 8:00AM
Tinker Cliffs**

7.2 miles, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
9 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, the trailhead for this hike is on Route 779 roughly halfway between Catawba and Daleville. The hike crosses meadows and Catawba Creek and then starts the ascent to Scorched Earth Gap where it continues on the AT to Tinker Cliffs. Several spots along the cliffs offer excellent views of McAfee's Knob and the Catawba Valley.

Maya Bohler..... 344-6588
or email..... mayabohler@cox.net
Kris Peckman..... 366-7780

**Sunday, January 16, 2011 1:00PM
Sharp Top Mountain**

4.4 miles, Moderate , \$3.00 carpool fee
30 miles from Roanoke

We will be hiking to the top of Sharp Top, at the Peaks of Otter on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Bedford County. The first half of the hike is a steep ascent with many stone steps. There is a spectacular 360-degree view from the summit. We will also be going to the wreck of an old bomber plane that crashed on the side of the mountain during World War II.

Maurice Turner 334-2128
Blanche Brower 387-9732

**Saturday, January 22, 2011 8:30AM
Fullhardt Knob Shelter Work Hike**

1.2 miles, Moderate, \$0.50 carpool fee
5 miles from Roanoke

We will be installing new rain guttering on the shelter to capture water for the cistern there.

David Jones 540-552-3058
Jonathan Reed 312-5865

**Sunday, January 23, 2011 1:00PM
Daleville (Rt 220) to Mountain Pass Rd (Rt 652)**

3.2 miles, Easy, no carpool fee - Roanoke

This hike will head north on the A.T., passing through woods and crossing Virginia Route 11 near Troutville. It will then ascend a hill to an open field which provides good views of the surrounding mountains.

Blanche and Merv Brower..... 387-9732

**Saturday, January 29, 2011 11:00AM
Bennett Springs Loop**

6.0 miles, Moderate, \$0.25 carpool fee
3 miles from Roanoke

This hike begins at Carvins Cove Parking Lot (off Rt. 311, Not Williamson Rd.) The one-mile ascent to the top of Brushy Mountain is quite steep, while the rest is moderate. Good views of McAfee's Knob and the valley are beautiful, while on the descent we will cross a stream several times

Jean Warren 384-6229
Rushdat Hale..... 309-7263

**Sunday, January 30, 2011 8:30AM
Black Horse Gap/Curry Creek Lollipop Hike**

12.0 miles, Strenuous, \$1.00 carpool fee
10 miles from Roanoke

This hike will begin and end at Black Horse Gap on the AT. It will follow the AT south to Curry Creek and then take the Curry Creek Trail to a Forest Service Road. It will then follow the Forest Service Road north approximately 2 miles. We will then veer off the FS road via an old trail which will lead back to the AT in about 1/2 mile just south of Wilson Creek. We will then follow the AT back to Black Horse Gap. This is mostly an in-the-forest walk with some views. It encompasses the Wilson Creek Shelter, Wilson Creek and Curry Creek. On the cut-back from the FS road to the AT, you can observe where an AT shelter existed prior to it being moved to its present location. NOTE: This hike will depend on the Parkway being open. If the Parkway is closed due to inclement weather, another hike will be substituted.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Lois Smith 862-7370

**Saturday, February 5, 2011 10:00AM
Jennings Creek (Rt 614) to
Bryant Ridge Shelter**

5.9 miles, Moderate , \$2.00 carpool fee
23 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County not far from Arcadia and Buchanan. This will be an out and back hike to the Bryant Ridge Shelter on the A.T. This shelter is located on a scenic part of the creek. The shelter has three levels and is well-worth seeing. Hot liquid refreshments will be enjoyed at the shelter.

Kenny Garrett293-7967
or emailcodenine911@hotmail.com
Sue Scanlin.....989-0497
or email scanlin@verizon.net

**Saturday February 12, 2011 11:00AM
Roanoke River Greenway – Salem Section**

5.0 miles, Easy, no carpool fee - Salem

Walk the Salem sections of the Roanoke River Greenway, up and back from Rotary Park (on Electric Road near Lewis Gale Hospital). This trail has good spots to see the natural Roanoke River up close. Lunch stop at El Cubanito, a few blocks off the trail, before the return to our starting point. We'll inspect the proposed route for the connector trail between East Riverside and the David Smith Trail in Moyer Park, and take a peek at the proposed route for the next section, running upstream from Eddy Ave.

Diana Christopulos387-0930
Mark McClain.....355-6526
or emailmcclainmark@comcast.net

**Sunday, February 13, 2011 8:00AM
North Mountain Trail**

10.4 miles, Strenuous, \$1.00 carpool fee
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.

Kris Peckman..... 366-7780

**Sunday, February 20, 2011 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

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

We will be doing trail repair on the trail on Catawba Mountain, near MacAfee Knob.

David Jones540-552-3058

**Sunday, February 20, 2011 1:00PM
Read Mountain Trail**

4.5 miles, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
7 miles from Roanoke

Join us for a hike up the trail to the summit of Read Mountain in Roanoke County. There are good views of McAfee Knob from the summit of the mountain.

Dave Sutton 774-0648

**Saturday&Sunday, February 26-27, 2011 9:00AM
Mau-Har Trail and Three Ridges Loop
Overnight Backpack**

13.5 miles, Strenuous, \$6.00 carpool fee
70 miles from Roanoke

Located in the Three Ridges Wilderness Area in Nelson County, the hike takes us on trails built and maintained by the Tidewater AT Club. It's a "lollipop hike", starting and ending where the AT crosses Route 56 and the Tye River. After 1.7 miles on the A.T., we branch off onto the Mau-Har Trail, which takes us past a lovely waterfall and along a creek up to the Maupin Fields Shelter. We will camp overnight here. The next day we will continue climbing on the A.T. to the summit of Three Ridges, with lots of great views, then down past the Harpers Creek shelter, up to the ridge, and back down to the Tye River. Please note, due to Wilderness Area restrictions this hike will be limited to 10 participants. Participants should also be prepared for camping in cold conditions.

Mike Vaughn..... 992-1350
or email mikeva999@yahoo.com

**Sunday, February 27, 2011 11:00AM
Cascades National Scenic Trail**

4.0 miles, Easy, \$5.00 carpool fee
46 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 \$3.00 per vehicle to park at the trailhead.

Sue Scanlin 989-0497
or emailscanlin@verizon.net

**Sunday, March 6, 2011 9:00AM
Carvins Cove Trails**

9.0 miles, Strenuous, \$0.50 carpool fee
6 miles from Roanoke

Carvins Cove extravaganza! How many trails can we go on in one day? Hi-Dee-Hoe to Four Gorge to Brushy Mountain to Happy Valley to Songbird to Enchanted Forest to Comet to Kerncliff to Hemlock Tunnel back to Brushy Mountain and finally finishing with some more Hi-Dee-Hoe.

John Merkwon..... 904-2299

**Sunday, March 6, 2011 1:00PM
Trout Creek to Pickle Branch Shelter**

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

We will be taking a short hike along the A.T. from scenic Trout Creek in Craig County to the Pickle Branch shelter.

**Kenny Garrett..... 293-7967
or email.....codenine911@hotmail.com**

**Saturday, March 12, 2011 11:00AM
Wolf Creek Greenway**

4.5 miles, Easy, no carpool fee - Vinton

Walk the Wolf Creek Greenway in Vinton and Roanoke County (up and back). This trail traverses Goode & Stonebridge Parks, near William Byrd HS and terminates at the Blue Ridge Parkway. Bring picnic lunch to eat in one of the parks (weather permitting). Meeting place, parking area behind hair salon on the left just past intersection of Hardy Road and McDonald.

**Diana Christopulos..... 387-0930
Mark McClain 355-6526
or mcclainmark@comcast.net**

**Saturday, March 12, 6:00PM
Potluck Banquet
and Business Meeting**

Please come to our only official meeting and elect folks to fill the open slots on our board. What a nice excuse to eat a lot of very good food and see

**Carol McPeak, Carl Cornett & Maya Bohler
25 days trekking the remote Inner Dolpo
Region of northwestern Nepal.**

Christ Lutheran Church at Brandon Ave & Grandin Rd. Bring a covered dish and, if you like, a food item for RAM House.

**Sunday, March 13, 2011 8:00AM
Cascades to Butt Mountain**

10.8 miles, Strenuous, \$5.50 carpool fee
54 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike will first go along Little Stony Creek to the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. It will then go up the nature Conservancy Trail to Barney’s Wall, a cliff that features a 700-foot drop. There is a great view of the New River Valley from Barney’s Wall. From there it will continue on along the ridgetop of Butt Mountain to the location of an old fire lookout tower. The Forest Service charges a nominal fee (\$3.00) to park at the trailhead.

**Linda King 342-2411
or email.....jennelleking@aol.com**

**Saturday, March 19, 2011 6:00PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob
Moonlight Hike**

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

Join us for an exciting moonlight hike up to McAfee Knob. The moon will be full. Located west of Salem in Roanoke County, the hike follows the Appalachian Trail up and back. Extensive cliffs at the top afford unparalleled views of both the Catawba Valley and the city of Roanoke. Remember to bring a flashlight or headlamp!

**Maya Bohler 344-6588
or email..... mayabohler@cox.net
Rushdat Hale 309-7263**

**Sunday, March 20, 2011 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

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

We will be doing trail repair on the trail on Catawba Mountain, near McAfee Knob.

**David Jones 540-552-3058
Mike Vaughn 992-1350
or email..... mikeva999@yahoo.com**

**Sunday, March 20, 2011 1:00PM
Catawba Mtn. (Rt. 311) to Sawtooth (Rt. 785)**

4.3 miles, Easy, \$0.50 carpool fee
6 miles from Roanoke

Located in Roanoke County just west of Salem and I-81 near the Catawba Valley. This is up and down ridge walk through the forest coming out on pasture near the end. There are great views of the surrounding valleys off both sides of the ridge.

Blanche and Merv Brower387-9732

**Sunday, March 27, 2011 8:00AM
Anthony Knob Loop**

10.0 miles, Strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee
42 miles from Roanoke

Located about 6 miles east of Clifton Forge in the Longdale Use Area of the George Washington National Forest, this hike has a little bit of everything. There are three trails in this area; Anthony Knob, Blue Suck and YACCRS Run at 4.7, 1.4 and 3.0 miles respectively; however, some portions of these trails are very faint - bring your GPS if you got one for Christmas. An abundance of leaf-off views; lunch will be between two of Anthony's Knobs with a far off view of Clifton Forge. Return from Anthony Knob may involve some downhill bushwhacking or backtracking to access the stream side Blue Suck trail on our return to the start point.

John Merkwan 904-2299
Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Sunday, March 27, 2011 1:00PM
Poor Mountain**

5.0 miles, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
10 miles from Roanoke

This will be a hike on the DCR trail at Poor Mtn. near Twelve O'clock Knob Rd.

Maurice Turner 334-2128
Blanche Brower 387-9732

**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) _____ New Member Packet fee \$5.00 _____

Address _____ Indiv. # of years _____ x \$10.00 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____ Family # of years _____ x \$15.00 _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Individual life membership \$250.00 _____

Email _____ Family life membership \$300.00 _____

Year you joined RATC (make a guess!) _____ Donation \$ _____

Make checks payable to RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282 Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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



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344-8550 info@sspeedy.net

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
and a member of The Nature Conservancy and the Western Virginia Land Trust