

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Summer 2000

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.

President's Message

This year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Appalachian Trail Conference. RATC plans to celebrate this event at the annual Cornboil which takes place on Saturday, July 29, at the Catawba Community Center – starting at 6:00 P.M.

In addition to the usual good food and fellowship, there will be door prizes, displays, and live music. At 7 o'clock there will be a short program followed by the cutting of a 75th birthday cake which will be served with ice cream.

As usual, the price of admission is a covered dish (appetizer, side dish, bread or salad – no desserts this time, please). Hot dogs, hamburgers, cold drinks and, of course, corn will be provided. Mark this event on your calendar and plan to bring the entire family.

On a more somber note, I was saddened by the death of Bill Foot. Bill passed away last month after a long and courageous fight against cancer. He was a very active member of the Natural Bridge Club and an unabashed trail enthusiast in general. He and his wife, Laurie, were the first to do the entire American Discovery Trail. Many of you will recall the excellent slide show they gave of their trip during our 1998 annual meeting. Bill had many friends in RATC and throughout the entire trail community. He will be greatly missed.

Dick Clark

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

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Dick Clark
 Phone 989-7053
 Email..... artscoun@roanoke.infi.net

Vice President, Lucien Metayer
 Phone 344-1877
 Email..... metayer@roanoke.infi.net

Secretary, Sharon Bottomley
 Phone 989-1818
 Email..... sharonr@rev.net

Treasurer, Jim Gawne
 Phone 384-7023
 Email..... gawnejm@aol.com

Land Mgmt. Supervisor, Hal Cantrill
 Phone 387-2347
 Email..... hacantrill@worldnet.att.net

Trail Supervisor, Charles Parry
 Phone 951-1402
 Email..... parrycj@math.vt.edu

Shelter Supervisor, Ron McCorkle
 Phone 982-8289

Hikemaster, Mike Ferguson
 Phone 344-8525

Newsletter Editor, Bob Peckman
 Phone 366-7780
 Email..... bob@peckmanjazz.com

Membership Coordinator, Liz Lamson
 Phone 774-8981

Counselor, Leonard Adkins
 Phone 384-7485

Counselor, Don Nulph
 Phone 774-8618
 Email..... nulph-dr@worldnet.att.net

ATC Board of Managers, Jimmy Whitney
 Phone 344-4117
 Email..... jwhitney@mooreandcampbell.com

ATC Board of Managers Vice Chair, Jim Hutchings
 Phone 427-4536
 Email..... James.Hutchings@indsys.ge.com

ATC Trail & Land Management Committee-Hal Cantrill
 Phone 387-2347
 Email..... hacantrill@worldnet.att.net

ANCILLARIES

Social Chairman, Shirley Kothierner
 Phone 562-0356

Phone Tree Chairman, Liz Lamson
 Phone 774-8981

Hike Reports Editor, Kris Peckman
 Phone 366-7780
 Email..... kris@peckmanjazz.com

Newsletter Distribution, Bobbie Stitche
 Phone 890-2140
 Email..... bobbie@rbnet.com

Webmaster, David A. Cheslow
 Phone 389-7791
 Email..... dcheslow@swva.net

Roanoke College Rep., Brian Chisom
 Phone 389-7383, 375-2303

Mid-week Workhikes, Bill Gordge
 Phone 774-3016

ATC Land Trust Coordinators

James River to New River , Roger B. Holnback
 Phone --- 540-473-1515 Fax --- 540-473-1516
 Email..... holnback@aol.com

New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
 Phone 504-951-7580
 Email..... sreis38@hotmail.com

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Corn Boil

Saturday, July 29

WORK HIKES

Saturday and Sunday, July 29 & 30
KONNAROCK CREW – War Spur

Sunday, August 27, 2000
Blazing Southern End

Sunday, September 3, 2000
Blazing Southern End cont.

Sunday, September 17, 2000
Andy Layne Trail

BOARD MEETINGS

(Open to Club members who contact host in advance.)

Thursday, July 13, 730 p.m.
Hosted by Dick Clark

Thursday, August 24, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Liz Lamson

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

Hike Schedule - Summer 2000

Guests

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

Transportation

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

Meeting Place

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

Saturday, July 1 - 8:30 am

PETITES GAP TO THE JAMES RIVER
10 miles Moderate - \$3.50 Carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165
Saron Bottomley 989-1818

Sunday, July 2 - 1:00 pm

PRICE MTN SULFUR RIDGE LOOP
7 miles Moderate - \$3.00 carpool fee
Mike Ferguson 344-8525
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, July 9 - 8:30 am

NORTH MTN TO RT. 311
10 miles Moderate - \$1.50 carpool fee
Bob and Kris Peckman 366-7780
Saron Bottomley 989-1818

Sunday, July 9 - 1:00 pm

ANGELS REST
5 miles Moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Mervin Brower 387-9732
Dave Miller 977-3142

Sunday, July 16 - 8:00 am

PINNACLES OF DAN - \$3.50 carpool fee
8 miles Very Strenuous with bushwhacking
Must pre-register by 7-10-00.
Dave Cheslow 389-7791

Sunday, July 16 - 1:00 pm

Tinker Cliffs from Andy Layne Trail
6 miles Moderate - \$1.50 carpool fee
Liz Lamson 774-8981
Bill Lamson 774-8981

Sunday, July 23 - 8:00 am

WHITE TOP-LAUREL CIRCUIT LOOP
10 miles Moderate - \$4.00 carpool fee
Lucien Metayer 344-1877
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, July 23 - 1:00 pm

CASCADES - 4 miles Easy
\$3.00 carpool fee plus share of park fee
Don Nulph 774-8618
Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637

Saturday, July 29 - 6:00 pm

ANNUAL CORN BOIL PLUS
ATC ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
DISPLAYS and LIVE MUSIC
SPECIAL 75th BIRTHDAY CAKE

(hamburgers, hot dogs, corn and drinks provided
-- please bring a covered dish)

Catawba Community Center
Route 311 N to Right on Route 779
Shirley Kothierner 562-0356
Hal Cantrill 387-2347

Sat. & Sun., July 29 & 30 - 8:00 am

WORKHIKE WITH THE KONNAROCK CREW AT WAR SPUR - \$3.00 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Bob and Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, July 30 - 1:30 pm

Sunset Field to Apple Orchard Falls
3 miles Easy - \$3.50 carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165

Sunday, August 6 - 10:00 am

JOHNS CREEK MOUNTAIN TO RT. 42
8.5 miles moderate - \$3.00 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175
Gary Hale 268-5283

Sunday, August 13 - 9:00 am

CORNELIUS CREEK SHELTER-GLENWOOD
HORSE TRAIL LOOP
7.5 miles Moderate - \$3.50 carpool fee
Larry Austin 254-2092
Eric Miller 342-5030

Sunday, August 13 - 1:00 pm

STILES FALLS - 4 miles Easy - \$2.50 carpool fee
Jean Huffman 268-5051
Betty Mathews 343-4225

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members. We look forward to meeting you on the trail soon.

Gary Baber

Doug & Belinda Brining

Suzanne Brown

Mike, Susan, Jack & Ellen Loveman

Bev Coleman

Desmond R. Felts

Ralph Henderson

Jenny Lamb

David & Teresa Morse

Marjorie & Dan Petry

Randy Sowden

Pia Strunk

Trail Supervisor's Report

On May 18, we had very good attendance at our overseers' meeting. I want to thank Brian Chisom and the Roanoke College Outdoor Adventure Program for letting us use their facility. It worked out great. I haven't heard from a few overseers and wonder if you received my e-mail message. If I don't have your correct e-mail address or you prefer regular mail, please let me know. An updated list of overseers is appended to this report. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Marge Griffith and Ray Lawson, who are retiring from many years of service on Brush Mountain. I also wish to welcome aboard their replacements: Linda King and David Cheslow. Linda was able to accompany Marge and Ray on their final work trip.

We have some new service awards for trail workers and hike leaders. The precise requirements are published elsewhere in this Blazer. The year is Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 and it is retroactive to Oct. 1, 1999. If

you need some extra days to meet the requirements for a hat, T-shirt or both, the summer workhikes will be your last opportunity to get them in for this year.

This summer we will have the second Konnarock visit from July 27 - 31. Remember five days with the crew will get you a Konnarock T-shirt. We have rescheduled our southern end reblazing for August 27 and September 3. This is to reblaze all of our trail from Pearisburg to our southern end. We will work on the northern part the first day and the southern part the second trip. Exactly how much we get done the first day depends on turnout.

Our final work trip for this quarter will be on the Andy Layne Trail relocation. I am hoping to finish this relocation during the fall and winter. See you on the work trips.

Charles Parry

RATC Overseer Assignments Spring 2000

VA 611 (South end)

Kenny Garrett, Chris Bolling

VA 606

Mike and Virginia Reilly

Dismal Creek

Bill Floyd & Leslie Kay

Ribble Trail (north end)

David Hicks

Powerline

Charles & Gloria Parry

US 460 Bridge

(Break in our section)

Pine Swamp Shelter

Mike Ferguson

Bailey Gap Shelter

Bailey Gap Shelter

Hal Cantrill

War Spur Shelter

Clyde Perdue & Bill Ross

Rocky Gap

Brian & Leigh Anne Kelly

Sinking Creek

Jim & Jill Gawne

Niday Trail

Sara Patterson

VA 621

Linda King & Dave Cheslow

VA 620

Bob & Kris Peckman

VA 624

Ed Bessel, Don Nulph

& Maurice Turner

VA 311

VA 311

Red Crone & Leonard Adkins

Campbell Shelter

Ron McCorkle

Brickey's Gap

Bill Gordge

Ditch Trail

Zetta Campbell & Dick Clark

Angel's Gap

John Lynham &

Lucien Metayer

US 220

Homer & Therese Witcher

VA 652

Jim & Linda Hutchings

Salt Pond Road

Dave Miller

Black Horse Gap (North end)

Land Management Supervisor's Report

The demolition of the Vail House is now complete and the contractor is cleaning up a few final items there. It took a long while to get to this point, but it finally happened. The contractor has been delayed some by weather as the road in there is not passable after a rain for the big dump trucks that he had to use to haul the material from the house out for disposal. The old Valleydale truck body that is down below the Vail site along with some old sheet metal from cars will also be hauled out. The power line to the house is also being removed. My report in the last Blazer had a brief description of why we are doing this.

If you have hiked in late May or early June to McAfee you may have seen the tracks of the large trucks going in and out.

The Virginia State Corporation Commission hearing on the AEP proposed 765 kV power transmission line from Wyoming West Virginia to either Daleville or Jacksons Ferry took place the first two weeks of May. Mike Dawson from

the ATC and I testified before the Commission the second week of May. Briefly we oppose the Wyoming to Daleville option and with proper mitigation are willing to allow the Wyoming to Jacksons Ferry line to cross the Appalachian Trail beside I-77. The process is not finished as the Hearing examiner has to make a decision and send it to the three member Commission, and then the Forest Service must finish the EIS and make a ruling.

We are therefore again in a waiting mode on the 765 kV transmission line and expect the hearing examiner's ruling later this year.

The next major activity is to start building a small pole barn for storage of club maintenance materials. This will be in the Catawba Valley. We have a \$1000 grant to start this project and we will be working on getting the necessary permits in early summer. If anyone is interested in working on this, please contact me.

Hal Cantrill

Service Awards for RATC Members

Goals:

1. To encourage members to contribute time to the club and
2. To reward members who contribute time to the club.

Worker Awards:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. RATC hat. | - 4 workdays including at least 2 workhikes |
| 2. RATC T-shirt | - 7 workdays including at least 4 workhikes |
| 3. RATC T-shirt & hat | - 9 workdays including at least 5 workhikes |
| 4. Konnarock T-shirt | - 5 Konnarock days (up to 3 also count as workhikes) |

Leader Awards:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. RATC hat | - 5 hikes |
| 2. RATC T-shirt | - 8 hikes |
| 3. RATC hat & T-shirt | - 10 hikes |

Definition of terms:

Workdays – Days spent working on club-maintained trails.

Konnarock Days – Days worked with the Konnarock Crews.

Workhikes – Work trips on club trails organized by RATC or ATC.

Hikes Led – The number of club-hikes on which the person serves as leader or co-leader that are 1. not cancelled, 2. attended by the leader and 3. reported on in the following Blazer.

Maximum one RATC hat and one RATC T-shirt and one Konnarock T-shirt per year. If you qualify for 2 hats, you may elect one RATC T-shirt or one hat. If you qualify for 2 RATC T-shirts you will receive one RATC T-shirt and one hat.

The RATC Mid-Week Crew

What company do you work for?

Picture this. We are wrestling stubborn wheel-barrow loads of rip rap onto the Wolf Creek Greenway where the route passes under the Washington Ave. bridge in Vinton. It's hot. We are sweating. We are busy.

A black Cadillac a mile long eases up silently. Out steps a beautifully coiffured elderly lady. She addresses Lynn Bryant (of all people) 'Pardon me my good man" she says, "But what company do you work for? I really like the way you work, and I would like to hire you." To which Lynn replies, dredging up his best manners, and doffing his grubby hat," Lady, money can't buy us, we work for free!" Incredulous, bemused, befuddled, she drives away.

Naturally we were pleased to have presented ourselves in such a distinguished manner. But we were not a little disgruntled because the lady had chosen Lynn to approach. He's got the most rascally looking face in the bunch.

In spite of such temptation for huge financial gains, the mid-week crew has been going about its business in much the same old way.

At the request of Al McPherson, acting District Ranger for the New Castle, we placed a string of large boulders across a perennial 100 yard mud hole on the Dragons Tooth trail. It was nice to have a simple one day project to do. Other activities are taking much longer..

One major undertaking is the rehabilitation - in many places the re-creation - of the Ferrier/Lick Mt. trail system. These trails have not been worked on for years, and are in danger of melting back into the forest. It has taken us about a year to cover 7 or 8

miles but we are nearing completion with about a mile to go.

The trouble now is that we have a three mile walk in to the work place. No complaints however - this is a lovely area, wild, secluded, roadless for the most part - and whoever originally laid out these trails really knew what they were doing. We love it out there!

But we have a wider vision, which we are talking to the Forest Service about. As many people know, the North Mt. trail is now open all the way through to Stone Coal Gap, with a great side trail, the Catawba Valley Trail connecting with the Andy Lane Trail at Rt. 779 and hence to the AT.

We hope to be allowed to line up the North Mt. and Lick Mt. trails and rebuild the old abandoned Price Mt. trail and eventually find our way to the James River. And then what? A three day canoe trip down the river to the Hwy 501 bridge where the AT crosses the river, and it's back on the Trail south to the Dragon's Tooth, or New Castle via the Ferrier or Lick Mt. trail. We have the support of Glenn Rose, who has the Canoe Livery in Buena Vista. We call this the Mountains to the River Loop Trail. The big news is that the Rails to Trails project from New Castle to Eagle Rock finally seems to be on the way. Thus one can envision all kinds of recreational potential for this area in the years to come.

The mid-week group has also been active in places other than Craig County. We have been seen on valley greenways. We have repaired storm damage on the Hanging Rock Historic Trail, and improved the Hardy Rd. parking lot for the Wolf Creek Greenway with a decorative fence, signs, landscaping and plantings, and constructed trash receptacles. We are currently constructing new trail on Read Mt.

Bill Gordge.....774-3016

The next Blazer deadline is August 15. The best way to send Blazer material and hike reports is to cut and paste it into email or attach MS-Word-97 to bob@peckmanjazz.com or mail a floppy. I can scan plain typing and of course handwriting is also fine. I am just the editor, I only print what you send me.

Bob Peckman

Hike Reports

Harvey's Knob to Bobblett's Gap February 27, 2000

Ed Wallace (leader), Sue Scanlin (assistant), Mary Lou Gaminde, Dana Helsley, Mike Ferguson, Margaret Ferguson, Billy and Natalie Ferguson, Pat Cousins, Carolyn Baratta

Nice, short, easy, almost level hike. It was an unseasonably warm day, but cloudy. Pat said she didn't do rain or wind. I told her it wasn't going to do either. (I lied.) Natalie, at 2 months, has to be the youngest person I have ever hiked with, although Homer and Therese's youngsters were pretty young also.

Good day for a hike although it did sprinkle on us at the end.

Ramsey Draft - Jerry's Run Loop March 5, 2000

Maurice Turner (leader), Linda King (assistant), Malcolm Black, H.R. Blankenship, Lucien Metayer, Bob and Kris Peckman, Ed Wallace, Dave Spangler

We parked our vehicles at the Ramsey Draft parking lot and hiked a few hundred yards to the trailhead. The Ramsey Draft trail consisted of a series of stream crossings, some requiring a balancing act when it came to maneuvering over rocks and logs to reach the other side. One hiker decided to remove his boots and wade in sandals at one crossing while another decided to cross over on a log at a different location, bronco-style, only the log didn't move! The Ramsey Draft was somewhat challenging, but everyone seemed to enjoy it. To assist hikers, cairns were placed at some of the stream crossings. The Jerry's Run trail had stream crossings also, but they weren't as difficult. This trail was more picturesque, giving the area a more wilderness appearance. After a lunch break, we continued on the Jerry's Run trail, passing the site where a shelter once stood. Only the rock chimney remains. This trail led us into the Shenandoah and then the Road Hollow trail that took us back to the parking lot. The Shenandoah took us out of the wilderness area and both this and the Road Hollow trails did not have stream crossings, but ridgeline and switchbacks that made the hike easier. There wasn't much of an elevation change during the entire hike. Besides our group, most of the hikers we saw were backpackers. Everyone made it back to the parking lot unscathed around 2:30, which gave us extra time to take a snack break at a nearby convenience store before returning to Daleville. The weather was very pleasant for our hike, somewhat cool but still ideal for the hike.

Jennings Creek to Bryant Ridge Shelter March 5, 2000

Zetta Campbell (leader), Suzanne Barnett (assistant), Sharon Harrison, Heather Harrison, Nathan Harrison, Jessica Harrison, John Harrison, David Bowers, Cody Bowers, Larry Cook, Laura Gardner, Dick Moran, Gene Downs, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Jennifer Pfister, Joseph McManus, Dana Helsley

T-shirts and shorts were appropriate for this beautiful, mild, un-winterlike day. It was sunny with clear blue sky.

We left Daleville, traveled up I-81, regrouped at the Arcadia exit, and went on to the trailhead. The leaders from then on led from the rear. Number 1 leader dropped way behind on the initial climb and was by herself for some miles. Down the other side to the stream we went, and then up and above the stream, looking for the shelter. Number 1 leader finally came upon Sharon Harrison and her children taking a break, wondering how far away the shelter was, and considering turning back. The all-knowing leader did not know, having been there perhaps only once before, and had decided to turn back with them and leave a note when some of the group began to return. They said it was about 15 minutes walk from there, and furthermore, Suzanne had sprained her ankle, was waiting at the shelter for Number 1, and was going to take a side trail out to the road and walk back to the cars that way. Not all were so sure she was waiting, but most were, so Number 1 perhaps walked about a mile back and forth along the trail as she tried to decide to return or go on and join Suzanne (a slight exaggeration). Finally, she decided on the latter. Hurrying as much as she could, it seemed a long time before she heard Suzanne hollering her name. Suzanne was on her way to the side trail and was up on a hill; so, Number 1 had to bypass the palatial two-story shelter and go on. There was some pretty good climbing before we reached the road. We must have been on three different roads before we reached the cars. Some way to lead, leaving the group leaderless! But the people were up to the occasion. Upon reaching the cars, the leaders found some had gone back while others had considerably waited for them. Suzanne's ankle was not badly sprained. Indeed she hiked as if nothing were wrong. It was an enjoyable and interesting hike.

RT 621 to Niday Shelter March 12, 2000

Bill and Liz Lamson (leaders), Suzanne Barnett (assistant), Zetta Campbell, Linda Thomas, Jeff Rakes, Dana Helsley

We got all seven of us in the van and headed over Catawba Mountain with high hopes that the clouds would move out, the sun would peep through and warm us, and that spring would come a week early. But that was not to be, so at the trailhead on Rt 621 we buttoned up and zipped up and headed up the trail to the Niday Shelter.

We were soon warmed by the walking and the congenial company. After snacks at the shelter, we checked out the water supply (plenty this spring) and headed back to the car. Since the hike was a short one, Bill gave us the van tour along Trout Creek on the way home.

**Angel's Rest Workhike
March 19, 2000**

Charles Parry (leader), Mike Ferguson (assistant), Bill Floyd, Charles Hagedorn, Bill Gordge

The project for the day was to finish up a switchback that we started last fall. The worksite was less than 1/4 mile above the road, so it didn't take long to get there. Most of the lower half was already completed, so we brushed out the upper half and redirected the route a bit. Mike and I began working on steps at the switchback corner, and all went well for a while, but then we began to hit rock ledges, big immovable rock ledges. We had to adjust our step plan accordingly, but eventually managed to get in a pretty decent set of steps. By midafternoon, we were ready to blaze in the new trail and close out the old one. This switchback, together with one nearby that we put in a couple years ago, really improved the lower part of the trail. Now we need to work higher up the mountain.

**Stiles Falls
March 19, 2000**

Kay Clatterbuck (leader), Linda Akers, Marianne Demko, Pat Cousins, Sherry Kessel, Roberta Busch, Dana Helsley, Mary Gilbert

When Linda King was unable to be the hike leader, I switched the hike to Stiles Falls, a hike I was familiar with. We had a pleasant hike with some wet feet, and at one point part of the group got separated across the creek. Since the drought had ended, the falls were much prettier than on previous hikes. Of course the extra water also made the creek crossings more difficult, hence the wet feet. A few wildflowers were also spotted on this trip.

**Wilson Creek Shelter Workhike
March 26, 2000**

Maurice Turner (leader), Peggy and Lyn Bryant (assistants), Bill Gordge, Malcolm Black, H.R. Blankenship, Don Nulph

We drove Route 11 north to Route 606 by way of Camp Bethel and hiked the trail that took us past the camping area below Wilson Creek and to the AT and then hiked north to the shelter. Thanks to the Bryants, this direction saved us time and distance. Lyn and Peggy had already selected a site for the privy and cut the poles for moving it to the new location. We managed to dig about half the hole without obstructions, but the remainder consisted of a hard clay and then rock. We quit digging around 4:00 and moved the privy, which required little leveling as it was placed perfectly the first time. We had Don Nulph to

join us after lunch and a weekend backpacker helped us also. We got back to Troutville around 5:00.

**Bobblett's Gap/Hammond Hollow Loop
March 26, 2000**

Kenny Garrett (leader), Gary Hale, Linda Akers, Berlie Bowman, Marianne Demko, Mary Ann Johnson, JoAnn Lampros, Dana Helsley, Sharon and Heather Harrison, Mary Gilbert, Joseph McManus, Jesse Garrett

The weather was perfect. Not a cloud in the sky and a sunny 70 degrees. Gary Hale was appointed to be co-leader on the scene. And leave it to Kenny to turn a 6-mile hike into a 7-miler, with no extra charge. The trail was in good shape, and the group had a great mixture of new members and seasoned veterans. Moral of hike: don't follow street signs located in the middle of the woods on a Forest Service road.

**Licksillet Hollow Work Hike
April 2, 2000**

Charles Parry (leader), Lynn Bryant (assistant), Maurice Turner, Malcolm Black, Dave Hicks, Bill Floyd, Walter Parry

It was supposed to be blazing day, but the weather wasn't cooperating. I encountered light rain on the way down, the skies were dark, and the forecast was bad. Fortunately, at the banquet, Kenny Garrett had mentioned the need of some bridges. Before leaving home, I threw tools, nails and spikes needed for bridges into my truck. We met at Trent's Store and agreed the outlook for blazing was bleak. I unfolded Plan B (for Bridges) and asked Dave where the closest Lowe's was. He said Dublin. We did a quick estimate of the lumber needed and sent Dave and Malcolm off for lumber with the club Lowe's credit card. We then sent Bill and Walter up above Kimberling Creek to install some sign posts and replace some AT emblems. The rest of us went over to Licksillet to cut stringers for the bridges. We were peeling stringers when the other four arrived at about the same time. Malcolm and Dave cut the bridge lumber up with a chainsaw while the rest of us worked on stringers. After getting the lumber cut, Malcolm and Dave went up on Dave's section to cut out a few blowdowns. We finished two bridges right at the road and were waiting for the others to return when we decided to build a third bridge across a small stream and much shorter than the others. They arrived back before we finished. A good day's work.

**Daleville to Hay Rock
April 2, 2000**

Hal Cantrill (Leader), Tony Martin, Lynnette Martin, Larry Cook, Bev Coleman, Dana Helsley

Six of us showed up on a not too promising looking Sunday afternoon at the commuter lot in Daleville. It was

misting rain and there was a debate on whether to go or not go, but there was enthusiasm and it wasn't raining very hard. Just a short way down the Trail, we all began to check if it was still raining. Rain gear came off and we proceeded up the mountain. As usual the scenery from the ridge over looking Carvins cove is spectacular. The section of Trail along the crest of Tinker Ridge has always been a special Trail as it winds through the pines and through the rocks. One of our hikers who had not been there before must have taken a roll and a half of pictures. When we got to Hay Rock we all elected not to go up through the crack to the sloping face of the rock as it was expected to be still slick from the rain previously. As I remember it was slick in places on a dry day. Unfortunately, we also had a lot of painted graffiti on the underside of the rock. That does take away from the sense of remoteness hiking the Appalachian Trail. We made it all the way back to the cars with only a few drops of rain. Those that stayed away missed a delightful 8 mile hike.

Bearwallow Gap to Black Horse Gap April 9, 2000

Bobbie Sticher (leader), Maurice Turner (assistant), H. R. Blankenship

We traveled north on the Blue Ridge Parkway and left a car at Black Horse Gap, then on to Rt. 43 to begin the hike at Bearwallow Gap. In this section the A.T. weaves along the Bedford-Botetourt county line and crosses the parkway three times. We had magnificent views on both sides all during the hike.

Two miles into the hike we had views of Buchanan and Purgatory Mountain. At the Peaks of Otter Overlook we had views of Sharp Top and Flat Top. We crossed the parkway for the first time and hiked to the Bobblets Gap Shelter. At the Harvey's Knob Overlook we had another view of the Peaks of Otter and we crossed the parkway for the second time.

At the Montvale Overlook we had views of Montvale and surrounding farmlands. We continued on the same side of the parkway to the Taylors Mountain Overlook. There we crossed the parkway for the third time and hiked on to Black Horse Gap. We met one thru hiker who was averaging 18- 20 miles per day.

We had a beautiful, cloudless, but windy day. The temperature was in the 50's. We saw many wildflowers. Toothwort was everywhere along the trail. We saw trailing arbutus, birdfoot violets, gaywings, pussy toes, star chickweed and rue anemone.

To those of you who decided not to go you missed a perfect day for hiking!!!!

Black Ridge Trail to Rocky Knob Campground – April 9, 2000

Larry Metayer (leader), Mervin Brower (assistant), Blanche Brower, Zetta Campbell, Linda Akers, Dave Mitten, Jennifer Pfister, Michael Santoroski, Carrie Methany and Dana Helsley

We headed out at 1 PM down the Blue Ridge Parkway to the Rocky Knob Visitor Center and Picnic Area, a 50-mile drive from Roanoke. The hike started at the Black Ridge trailhead. The cool temperatures and brisk winds made for an ideal day for hiking. The 360 degree views from the open meadows were outstanding on this clear day. Black Ridge Trail merges with Rock Castle Gorge Trail and we continued till we found a sheltered place to take a break. After refueling we hiked up to Rocky Knob, the site of the old AT shelter overlooking Rock Castle Gorge. Larry gave a short history of the AT in this area before it was moved to its present location. Also, he read from Earl Shaffer's Book "Walking With Spring", where Earl writes about the shelter. Also, everyone viewed the picture of the shelter that he took on his journey. We headed off Rocky Knob and into open meadow with views to fill the soul. It made it hard to leave this area and to go back to urban life.

Happy Trails

Upper Loop Hoop Hole from Roaring Run April 16, 2000

Ed Wallace (leader), Jill Gawne (assistant), Jim Gawne, Neil Fitzpatrick, Larry Cook, Gary Hale

It was a pretty day for a hike, although it did rain just as we finished up. It seemed a little warm for this early in the year, or maybe I was more out of shape than the rest. I think the old way we did this hike was better than the way we did it today. The first two miles were mostly on a ho-hum, non-scenic dirt road. The loop itself was very scenic. Although nobody in the group had done this hike from Roaring Run before and nobody had a map, we didn't lose a single person.

Carvin's Cove Boat Launch to Graveyard April 16, 2000

Zetta Campbell (leader), Sue Scanlin (assistant), Bev Coleman, Carolyn Baratta, Dana Helsley, Sharon, Heather, and Nathan Harrison, Linda Akers, Marianne Demko, Marion Kerfoot, Pat Cousins, Mary Gilbert, Sharon Bottomley

The last couple of days had been cold, rainy, misty, but it cleared up for this hike. It was beautiful, sunny and warm--shorts and T-shirt weather. In fact, some of us got too warm under the hot sun.

Sue brought the group from Towers to Carvin's Cove, where Zetta and some others waited. Just as Sue set out with the group on the hike, Carolyn showed up, but Sue didn't see her. Therefore, Carolyn and Zetta were way

behind the others and hiked together. They enjoyed stopping briefly to examine wildflowers, mostly violets, along the way. Other walkers, and bikers, were out. Redbud and dogwood were blooming. The Cove looked much better. Someone who worked there said the water level was down only a little over three feet. Sue found the trail to the graveyard, but number one leader passed it by and had to come back. Two of the group turned back after about a mile or so. The hikers were rather scattered, but all returned safely.

It was a beautiful day, but dark clouds persisted. Yet rain held off until after the hike and maybe until all were home. Then thunderstorms rolled in.

**Compton Gap to Manassas Gap (I-66)
April 22, 2000**

Jimmy Whitney (leader), Don Hoke

Larry Cook drove up from Martinsville, and his truck died on entering Daleville Commuter lot. Don tried to get him help, but Larry's wife was dispatched to assist. So Don and I drove our separate cars to the trailhead, listening to the radio as the Feds grabbed Elian. The only deer we spied were from our cars. We hiked past the Washington National Zoo preserve and saw donkeys and some kind of goats, plus miles and miles of fencing. PATC had some nice boardwalk in places but it was muddy most of the way. There were splotches of green and bare forest as spring had not arrived. The two of us had a pretty good day.

**Tar Jacket Ridge – Cole Mountain – Old Hotel
Loop
Sunday April 30, 2000**

The Players: Dick Clark (leader), Larry Austin, H. R. Blankenship, Frank Dieter, Gary Hale, and Jennifer Pfister

This was advertised as an "as you like it" hike – that is, you could do both loops of the figure-eight for eleven miles – or just the second for six. As it turned out, everyone opted for the whole enchilada – no wimps in this group.

We started at Hog Camp Gap and got the road walking out of the way first. Then we took the A.T. south over Tar Jacket Ridge and back to our starting point. Along the way we met a couple of thru-hikers from Massachusetts.

The next section through the open fields of Cole Mountain was, of course, the highlight of the hike. The day was exceptionally clear and, from our lunch spot, it seemed as if you could see forever. I was able to show another thru-hiker exactly where he would be going: over Tar Jacket, Rocky Mountain, Spy Rock and then on to

The Priest and Three Ridges – each etched magnificently against an intoxicating blue sky.

To wrap things up, we took the newly-relocated swing down to Cow Camp Gap where we picked up the Old Hotel Trail. Some of the hikers who were new to this trail asked me where the hotel was located. The hotel, of course, kept its usual low profile.

**Sinking Creek Mountain Workhike
May 7, 2000**

Charles Parry (leader), Hal Cantrill (assistant), Dan Chitwood, Tonya Harper, Joe Kelley, Brian Kelley, Kris Peckman, Malcolm Black, Jim Wray

We met at the Caldwell fields and discussed a plan of action. All except Gloria, Kris and me would drive to the end of the Lee Road, leaving Hal's car at the powerline. The Kelleys would cover most of the mountain with a chainsaw, while the rest of us clipped until we met.

Our threesome hiked up an old road, hitting the AT at the powerline. On the way up we spotted a scarlet tanager and later we saw a couple more. Upon reaching the top we immediately encountered three hikers going north. They asked about water and we told them Sarver's Cabin was the only source. The trail along the mountaintop was in quite good condition with no blowdowns and not too much clipping. We had lunch at the Sarver turnoff and shortly thereafter started finding more greenbrier. In about a mile we met Brian and Joe and were about to part company when he heard the clipper crew coming. That crew had met up with the goats who have taken up residence on Sinking Creek Mountain. We exited down the Sarver trail, taking time to look over the proposed shelter site. When we reached the powerline, Hal took Brian up to get his truck while the rest of us waited. The soft drinks were in my truck up the road a couple of miles, so everybody went up there for a cold one before heading home.

**McAfee's Knob, Joint Hike with Natural Bridge
Trail Club - May 7, 2000**

Participants: RATC members: Sue Scanlin (substitute leader), Mary Lou Gaminde, Betty Mathews, Tom Sowers. NBATC members: Nancy Anthony, Marshall Anthony, Dave Maxwell, John Venable, LeAnne M. Burns, T.C. Harvey

We started out on a somewhat wrong note with the RATC members meeting and waiting at Hanging Rock Orange Market and the NBATC members meeting and waiting at the parking lot on the mountain. Who coordinates joint hikes?

Eventually, we found each other and from that point on all went well. Lots of wildflowers were seen along the trail and Nancy could identify every single one. And she is an expert on birds, too! At the very end she was

enthusiastically reporting on having seen two scarlet tanagers.

With the temperatures in the 80's, the group spread out a lot during the ascent. Tom, who had a commitment later in the afternoon, was even on his way down already before the rest had reached the top. A young through-hiker couple caught up with us near the top, stopped to chat and sped on. The mini-breeze at the top was most welcome. Because of the haze, the view wasn't the best but good enough to thrill everybody and especially those in the group who had never been to McAfee's before. Can you believe this: a young lady, a recent arrival from California, asked me whom she could contact to get involved in workhikes!!!! Needless to say, I called her later in the evening and gave her a couple of numbers to call. How's that for catching fish on a mountaintop? After an extended rest and recovery period at the top, most of us returned to the parking lot via the fire road where cars with A/C were waiting.

Dragon's Tooth and Cove Mountain May 13, 2000

Sharon Bottomley (leader), Gary Hale, Dana Helsley

The rhododendrons were in full bloom with profusions of lavender blossoms as we started up the blue blaze trail. It was a hot day, but once we climbed up to the tooth, there was a pleasant cool breeze along the ridge.

The day was clear and we had a good view of the valley below. We hiked along the trail where fires had occurred in previous years. New growth was already well underway in the area.

Dana did indeed spot a scarlet tanager in the canopy as we went further along the path. The temperature rose and humidity returned as we descended toward Route 621 and the comfort and air conditioning of Gary's car.

Devil's Marbleyard May 14, 2000

Kenny Garrett (leader), Hal Cantrill (assistant), Jesse Garrett, Lance Garrett, Mary Lou Gaminde, Zetta Campbell, Maurice Turner, Pia Strunk, David Leaman, Mary Gilbert, Fred Cocke, Brent Kawamura

Oh what a beautiful day for a walk through the woods. We were able to hike the Belfast Trail to the intersection with the AT and to also spend time playing in the Devil's Marbleyard. The weather was as close to perfect as possible for the hike and for climbing the splendid rocks in the boulder field. Two small black snakes were seen along the trail and several lizards around the boulders.

Both the mountain laurel and the rhododendron were in bloom along the trail. Fun was had by all.

Damascus Trail Days May 20, 2000

Ed Wallace (leader), Mike Ferguson (assistant), Margaret, Billy, and Natalie Ferguson, Maurice Turner, Larry Cook, Gary Hale

It didn't rain. First time in three or four years. Seemed like more people were in attendance this year. Lots of exhibits, entertainments, firehouse BBQ chicken. More dogs this year also, along with the usual crazies in the hikers' parade.

Ladyslipper Hike on Fort Lewis Mountain - May 21, 2000

Mervin Brower (leader), Zetta Campbell (assistant), Linda Akers, Blanche Brower, Marianne Demko, Dana Helsley

The hike started at Havens State Wildlife Management Area parking lot, which is not the usual place the club had gone hiking from. The hike was listed as six miles moderate, but this turned out to be strenuous due to no switchbacks. It is recommended if you are doing the hike, that you use hiking sticks for getting up and down. I am not sure this hike should be used for afternoon hikes due to the long stretches of steep climbs. It appears to be used as a dirt bike trail. We did not find any ladyslippers on the trail. We did find mountain laurel for most of the length of the trail, with rhododendron at the top of the mountain. The weather was sunny and not too hot until the end of the hike when Dana, Zetta, and Mervin got wet when caught in a shower at the end of the hike.

Dickerson Gap to Narrows May 28, 2000

Kenny Garrett (leader), Larry Austin (assistant), Gary Hale, Dave Boxwell

After a brief discussion, we decided to lengthen our hike and begin at Dickerson Gap trail. The first mile and a half was a climb of nearly 1500 feet with no switchbacks. The next 12 miles was a beautiful ridge walk with views of Giles County and Monroe County, WV. We observed numerous wildflowers. We also saw rabbit, chipmunks, numerous birds, and an orange salamander. We also met over a dozen other hikers on this busy Memorial Day weekend

The Hike Report Editor is **Kris Peckman**

A rescued puppy needs a special home with mature, active owner(s) – 16 wk old, male, black & white, lab/collie mix, great temperament, smart, loves cats & dogs. Call Shawna Carr, phone 540-552-1350 or email at iamsbeth@juno.com

Hike Schedule – Summer 2000 (cont.)

Saturday, August 19 - 7:00 am

RT. 66 TO RT. 50 (NORTH OF SHENANDOAH PARK)
 12 miles Strenuous - \$4.00 carpool fee
 Jimmy Whitney 344-4117
 Mike Ferguson 344-8525

Sunday, August 20 - 1:30 pm

BLACKHORSE GAP TO SALT POND ROAD
 5 miles Moderate - \$3.00 carpool fee
 Ed Wallace 774-0175
 Zetta Campbell 366-8165

Sunday, August 27 - 8:00 am

WORKHIKE-BLAZING SOUTHERN END OF RATC SECTION - \$4.00 carpool fee
 Charles Parry 540/951-1402
 Dave Hicks 540/674-8979

Sunday, August 27 - 1:30 pm

DEER TRAIL TO RT. 311
 4 miles Easy - \$2.00 carpool fee
 Zetta Campbell 366-8165
 John Lynham 336/292-7637

Sunday, September 3 - 8:00 am

WORKHIKE-BLAZING DAY CONTINUED FROM AUG. 27 - \$4.00 carpool fee
 Charles Parry 540/951-1402
 Kenny Garrett 890-8946

Sunday, September 3 - 1:00 pm

DRAGONS TOOTH
 5 miles Moderate - \$1.50 carpool fee
 Betty Mathews 343-4225
 Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637

Sunday, September 10 - 10:00 am

BEARWALLOW GAP to JENNINGS CREEK
 6 miles Moderate - \$3.00 carpool fee
 Bobbie Sticher 890-2140
 Larry Austin 254-2092

Sunday, September 10 - 1:00 pm

HARKENING HILL
 4 miles Moderate - \$3.00 carpool fee
 Mervin Brower 387-9732
 Betty Mathews 343-4225

Saturday, September 16 - 11:00 am

JOINT HIKE WITH NATURAL BRIDGE CLUB-MILL MTN LOOP AND STAR TRAIL
 6 miles Easy-Moderate - \$1.00 carpool fee
 Dick Clark 989-7053
 Marge Griffith 774-0693

Sunday, September 17 - 8:30 am

WORKHIKE ANDY LAYNE TRAIL
 \$1.50 carpool fee
 Charles Parry 540/951-1402
 Ron McCorkle 982-8289

 If accepted for membership, I agree to:

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Application New & Renewal

1. Support the objectives of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
2. Abide by the rules of the National and State Parks and Forests
3. Respect the interests of the owner when on private property
4. Keep trails and woodlands free of litter and
5. Abide by instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips

Names(s) _____

Address _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

Email _____

Family Membership New 1 year \$20 New 2 year \$35 Renew 1 year \$15 Renew 2 year \$30
 Individual Member New 1 year \$15 New 2 year \$25 Renew 1 year \$10 Renew 2 year \$20 Life \$500

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