

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

SUMMER 2002

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

STATEMENT OF POLICY

*The board of RATC is the final decision-making authority within the club, and responsibility is delegated to the various board members as stated in the by-laws. Furthermore, responsibility is granted to the individual overseers to do routine maintenance and repairs on their assigned sections of trail. Also, authority is granted to the individual hike leaders and assistants to lead and set directions on hikes to which they are assigned. **Any other** projects, repairs or changes to the trail, trail corridor or shelters require **prior** board approval. (See President's Message on page 3)*

We recently learned that Wendell Boitnott died a few weeks ago. He came out on several work hikes and was a good worker and a gentle soul. See p.10.

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TRAIL BLAZER

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CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES**Saturday, August 10, 5:00-9:00 PM****Music & Food at 6:00****Catawba Community Center****Corn Boil****WORK HIKES****Sunday, July 14 - 8:00 AM****Brushy Mountain****Sat. & Sun, August 10 & 11 - 8:00 AM****Konnarock – Angel's Rest****Sunday, September 22 - 8:30 AM****Catawba Mountain****Hike Scheduling****Monday, August 5, 7:00 PM****Hosted by *Suzanne Barnett*****BOARD MEETINGS****(All members are always welcome.****Please let the host know you plan to attend.)****Thursday, July 25, 7:30 p.m.****Hosted by *Laurie & Leonard Adkins*****At the Homeplace (optional dinner at 6:30)****Thursday, September 12, 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**

Hike Schedule

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

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

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

Sunday, July 7, 2002, 1:00 PM Petites Gap to Thunder Ridge

5 miles, moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee
Mervin and Blanche Brower 387-9732

Sunday, July 14, 2002, 8:00 AM Brushy Mtn. Workhike

\$3.50 carpool fee, Charles Parry 1-540-951-1402,
Kenny Garrett 890-8946

Sunday, July 14, 2002, 1:00 PM McAfee's Knob

7 miles, moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Saturday, July 20, 2002 Two Workshops – Drainage & Rock Work

Heidi Hase, 540-544-7388, hhase@atconf.org

Sunday, July 21, 2002, 8:00 AM Crabtree Falls and the Priest

9 miles, moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
Bobbie Sticher 890-2140, Laura Montague 725-3682

Sunday, July 21, 2002, 1:00 PM Roaring Run

3 miles, easy, \$3.00 carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165, Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, July 28, 2002, 8:00 AM 113-mile hike #3, Daleville to Rt 779

12 miles, strenuous, \$2.50 carpool fee
John Lynham 336-292-7637,
Laura Montague 725-3682

Sunday, July 28, 2002, 1:00 PM Buffalo Mountain

4 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, August 4, 2002, 9:00 AM 113-mile hike #7, Brush Mountain

8 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee
Rusty and Laura Schundler 344-4745

Sunday, August 4, 2002, 1:30 PM Rt. 621 to Niday Shelter

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

Monday, August 5, 2002, 7:00 PM Fall 2002 Hike Scheduling

Call Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sat and Sun. August 10 & 11, 8:00 AM Konarock Crew - Angel's Rest Workhike

\$3.50 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402, Bill Gordge 774-3016

Saturday, August 10, 5:00-9:00 PM Music & Food at 6:00 The Corn Boil Catawba Community Center

Social Chairmen, Dave & Lucy Downs
384-7219, dwnhmbb@rbnet.com

Sunday, August 11, 2002, 1:00 PM Stiles Falls

4 miles, easy, \$2.50 carpool fee
Bobbie Sticher 890-2140, Linda Akers 776-1969

Sunday, August 18, 2002, 10:00 AM Warspur-Chestnut Trail and AT

Buffet after hike at Mountain Lake Lodge if possible
5 miles, easy, \$3.50 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Terri McClure 375-2650

Sunday, August 18, 2002, 1:00 PM Apple Orchard Falls from Sunset Fields

3 miles, moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Diana Crow & David Bailey	Mozelle K Nunn	Steve Rittenhouse
Ronda & Tim Butterfield	Terry E. Parsell	David L. Schoendorfer
Tim Dorrell	Dan Pierce	Kyle & Lori Stone
Baron & Tina (Welcher) Gibson	Will & Amy Porubsky	Herb & Patsy Whitley
Erin Moran	Amy Richardson	Mark Young

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

Mervin Brower

President's Message

As Yogi Berra used to say, "It was déjà vu all over again."

Having addressed the incident of unauthorized cutting of ailanthus (tree of heaven) at the Sarver Hollow Shelter just two issues ago, I was confidently optimistic that similar problems were most unlikely. As things turned out, however, my optimism was misplaced. Only a few months later, RATC became embroiled in an extremely difficult situation involving unauthorized work on the Fulhardt Knob cistern.

The Statement of Policy on page one was written to reemphasize the Board's strong opposition to *unauthorized* projects of any type. It is important to understand that this policy is not new. It is part and parcel of our commitment, in conjunction with our agency partners, to do what is best for the Appalachian Trail. What is new is that, in light of these two incidents, the Board of RATC found it

necessary to articulate and publicize our long-standing protocol. We have tried to make the statement as unambiguous as possible, and we sincerely hope that it will forestall any such problems in the future.

The Appalachian Trail is and continues to be a work in progress. We encourage club members to share ideas with Board members and to bring suggestions to Board meetings. We will give due consideration to all proposals to improve the Trail. You must trust that we will consider the objectives of the RATC, the ATC and the Federal agency partners and that we will follow the protocols of our agency partners when we do that.

As Yogi Berra used to say, "Teamwork is usually better when people work together as a team." (Well, if he didn't say it, he should have.)

Dick Clark

History of Lost Spectacles Gap

There is a new book out, *Appalachian Trail Names* by David Lillard. This book states: Lost Spectacles Gap and Dragon's Tooth were both named in the 1930s by Tom Campbell, a Roanoke AT club member. He lost his glasses on a work trip...and guess where....? Hence the name. For Dragon's tooth he bestowed the name because of the rock formation.

Thought you should know for the next time you get to drag an interpretive type up the mountain who asks all sorts of questions.

Stephanie Bushong,

Stephanie is the Interpretive Specialist with the Lee Ranger District, GWJNF, 109 Moline Road
Edinburg, VA 22824, 540-984-4101, Fax 540-984-8989

Trail Supervisor's Report

First, let me remind you that the Konnarock Crew will be here from August 8 –12 working on trail improvements in the Angel's Rest area. Five days will get you a Konnarock T-shirt, but if you cannot work 5 days, please try to work one day. We never have too many people on such projects. There is plenty of work that needs to be done in that area.

Next, let's talk about Konnarock 2004. It has been 15 years since the AT was moved back to Catawba Mountain, following a 9-year stint on North Mountain. Unfortunately, much of the trail was not built to sustain the heavy traffic that it gets. This winter, we began restoration on some of this trail by installing a large number of steps on one of the hills between VA 311 and the Boy Scout Shelter. We need additional steps on the hill going down to the Shelter (which will probably be replaced next year).

Between the Boy Scout Shelter and the Catawba Mountain Shelter, much of the AT needs restoration work. This will be done on approximately the current location. The club will be working in this area during the fall and winter for the next several years. From the second shelter to the Knob, most of the AT will be relocated. Several of us, including Leonard and Laurie Adkins, Bob and Kris Peckman, Teresa Martinez and myself, have spent several days scouting and flagging a relocation in the area. The plan is to get the trail on a better grade and construct a trail which hopefully can withstand the heavy traffic. Some environmental analysis needs to be done and we hope to be ready to go by the summer of 2004. If we get 3 to 4 weeks of Konnarock, I think most of the work can be done in one season.

Charles Parry

Hikemaster Report

The Fall 2002 Blazer Scheduling will be on Monday night, August 5th, at 7:00 PM. Please give me a call or come to my place to help prepare the fall hike schedule.

I am pleased to announce that the requirements for earning a RATC hat or T-shirt have been reduced as of October 1, 2001. Leading or assisting hikes (which includes providing a hike report to the Blazer editor) qualifies you for awards as follows: 4 hikes for a hat, 7 hikes for a T-shirt, and 9 or more

hikes for both a hat and a shirt.

I hope you noticed in the Spring Blazer that we are trying to provide 2 or 3 hikes a quarter for those who want to obtain their 113-mile badge. When you have completed the required hikes, please let me know because I have the badges.

I hope to see you on a hike soon.

Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

To submit articles for the Blazer, or to update our mailing database, contact bob@peckmanjazz.com or 366-7780.

If the year on your label is 2001, then this is your last issue of the Blazer. We have had data problems. If it is our error, tell us and we will fix it.

Please give us address changes. Every Blazer mailed to an incorrect address costs us \$0.94.

Please email me at bob@peckmanjazz.com so I can update the email database.

Hike Reports

Sunday, March 3, 2001 - 8:00 AM Punch Bowl Mountain to the James River

Bobbie Stitcher (leader), H.R. Blankenship (assistant), Larry Austin, Gary Hale and Laura Montague

The morning was cloudy and a mist fell at times on the drive to the meeting place. But there was no rain as we drove to Natural Bridge and left a car at the parking lot for the James River Foot Bridge. We continued to the Blue Ridge Parkway and started the hike climbing Punchbowl Mountain. All morning we hiked seeing white fog between mountain peaks. It was an awesome display by nature that we were privileged to see!!!!

In the afternoon as the sun tried to come out and the temperature increased we had magnificent views on both sides of the trail. As we began the 21 switchbacks we had views of the James River and the town of Glasgow. There was very little hiking without outstanding views on the entire hike.

Sunday, March 3, 2001 - 1:00 PM Sulfur Ridge Loop

Zetta Campbell (leader), Mervin Brower (assistant), Blanche Hale, Lonnie Davis Dalton Jr., Loraine Dalton, Daniel Dalton, Mark Catron & Bear, Gary Adams, Richard Koffman and Robert Zampogna

We met at the Daleville commuter parking lot where we car pooled and drove on 220 north and then in Fincastle turning left on to Route 606 till we came to the top of Price Mountain.

We followed Zetta as she led the way out to the site. We lost one car in our car train which eventually found the site although we did not see them on the trail. We met Richard and Robert at the trailhead and they were great to have as they had hiked the trail before. Zetta had another engagement so did not hike with us very far on the trail. The weather was nice when we first started on the trail but got colder as we went on. We had four creek crossings which we managed without anyone getting a wet foot. It was nice to see a creek with water after all

the dry ones we have experienced for the last while. The rain on Saturday filled up the creek. When we got to the top of the ridge it was cold and very windy. We stopped up there to wait for people to catch up and have a breather after our steep climb. The view was very spectacular from the top. We all made it down without problems.

Sunday, March 10, 2001 - 8:00 AM Andy Layne Trail to Tinker Cliffs

Cancelled for no customers.

Sunday, March 10, 2001 - 1:00 PM Catawba Valley Trail

Suzanne Osborne (leader), Linda Akers (assistant), Winfred Noell, Marianne Demkó, Sharon Harrison, Carolyn Baratta, Maurice Turner, Zetta Campbell

The day was very windy, but sunny. We actually saw two trees blow down. It was a very congenial group.

Sunday, March 17, 2001 - 8:30 AM Catawba Mountain Workhike

Cancelled due to rain.

Sunday, March 17, 2001 - 1:00 PM Bottom Creek Gorge

Cancelled due to rain.

Sunday, March 24, 2001 - 8:00 AM Black Ridge to Rocky Knob Campground

Ed Wallace (leader), Lucien Metayer (assistant), Mark Packett, Betty Wallace, Martha Crockett

Nice day for a hike. Ordinarily this is an afternoon hike; but since it is such a long drive and the days are still short, we started in the morning. Martha and Betty hiked the loop and the rest of us went the rest of the way to the campground. We saw several deer and some turkeys.

**Sunday, March 24, 2001 - 1:00 PM
Devil's Marble Yard**

Kenny Garrett (leader), Jim Law (assistant), Mervin & Blanche Brower, Don Lawhorn, Sharon Harrison, Dave and Matt Sutton, Tony and Lynette Martin, Betty Mathews, Bill Parsley, Jesse and Lance Garrett, Rhonda Prillaman, T.J. Mick, Lonnie and Daniel Dalton, Charlotte Lomax, Sue Foy

This was a beautiful spring afternoon with a light breeze and a clear sky. Upon arrival to the trailhead, we had to adapt to limited parking spaces. We then took our large happy group up the mountain to the awesome boulder field known as "The Devil's Marbleyard". It was great to see several kids on this hike. Some relaxed on the rocks while others climbed towards the top of the marble yard. All descended the mountain safely and came away with good memories and a few photos.

**Saturday, March 30, 2001 - 8:30 AM
Stone Coal Gap to 311**

Maurice Turner (leader), Jim Law (assistant), Larry Austin, H.R. Blankenship, Gary Hale, Don Lawhorn, Laura Montague, Mark Packett, Kris Peckman

We started our hike at Stone Coal Gap around 9:30 on a partly cloudy Saturday. Some hikers out in front reported seeing deer and grouse; also some spring flowers such as bellwort, toothwort and trailing arbutus

Kris Peckman picked up two discarded bicycle tubes along the way. We did come in contact with two bicycle riders going the opposite direction. I wonder if bicycle riders have heard of "leave no trace".

An eyesore we noticed toward the 311 side of North Mtn. were boundary markers all over the place and it looked as though the trail was on private land in some places.

As we left the woods at Route 311, an arrow in the dirt led our eyes to two little trout lilies at the base of a tree. Hurray for spring!

We did finish our hike at Dragon's Tooth parking

lot around 3:30 and after doing the car switch, we were back at Orange Market around 5:00.

**Saturday, March 30, 2001 - 9:30 AM
Murray Run Greenway Trail**

Zetta Campbell (leader), Lynn Bryant, Sherri Kessel, Georgia Gallaher

We had rain the night before and rain was predicted for this morning but, while heavy clouds lingered, the sun came through and, in fact, Zetta discovered the first sunburn of the season on her forehead. Several people had phoned, but only Sherri showed up along with the leaders, making three. Late in the hike, the trip met Georgia on her way back. Since she knew the trail, she evidently assumed the meeting place would be the ballfield at Patrick Henry High School. Instead, the meeting place was the parking area about ¼ mile away. This, by the way, added ½ mile (coming & going) to the hike, totaling 4 miles instead of 3 ½. It was a warm and delightful hike. We started at the aforesaid high school, went on to Fishburn Park whence was Murray Run. Here several dogs and their owners were scampering about. At least the dogs were. Thence into the woods, on past Shenandoah Life building (at a distance) and on to Virginia Western Community College. Here we found a concrete picnic table and benches up on a hill where we enjoyed a snack and a nice view. Lynn had done considerable work on this trail, and entertained us with many interesting tales about encounters with landowners and experiences with building the trail. As we looked over at Mill Mountain, he described for us how this trail would connect with other trails and the one on Mill Mountain. Then we looped around, arriving back at the cars, getting home or wherever we wanted to go in time for lunch.

**Saturday, April 6, 2002, 9:30 AM
McAfee's Knob**

Suzanne Barnett (leader), Zetta Campbell (assistant), Tim Cole, Marianne Demkó, and Carol Broderson from Independence, VA., who drove 2 hours each way to hike with us.

The morning started out cold, but walking soon warmed you up. It was breezy and chilly up on the Knob, but the day was sunny and clear so that we could see the beautiful scenery from the top. It was a pleasant hike.

Sunday, April 7, 2002, 9:00 AM
113-mile Hike #1
Black Horse Gap to Salt Pond Road.

Rusty & Laura Schundler (leaders), Betty Matthews, Charlotte Lomax, Bruce Sellars, Sharon Harrison, Cindy Reardon, Malcolm Black, were all present on a nice day in early April for a quick hike of the northern-most portion of the Club's section of the Appalachian Trail. Half of the group met at the Daleville commuter lot at 9am then continued on to meet the others at the trailhead.

While spring had already come to the valleys, most of the trees on the trail were still without leaves, providing some nice views. Because the hike was relatively short, the group did not take any formal, long lunch-break, but several stops were made along the trail to enjoy the early spring weather. The final mile of the trail was a good uphill before we walked down Salt Pond Road to the cars on the Parkway.

All were back in their cars by about 1 pm after an enjoyable morning hike

Sunday, April 14, 2002, 8:30 AM
Catawba Mtn. Workhike

Charles Parry (leader), Laurie Adkins (assistant), Suzanne Barnett, Malcolm Black, Bruce Dunlavy, Brian Chisom, Matt Piper, Michael Eubank, Jennie Schafer, Bryant Burnett, Mac, Peanut (dogs).

We started with four at the parking lot and weren't sure if we would get too much done. We drove my truck and Laurie's car up the fire road close to the worksite. The plan was to complete the steps that we started in February. I said let's not carry too much lumber in as I don't want to carry it back out tonight. We got some lumber in and started work. We had three sections left to work and were making good progress, when Laurie asked if the Roanoke College group was coming. Before I could answer, we looked up and there they were. I assigned them a rocky section of trail to smooth out. By lunch time we had the work near the top of the hill essentially done. One thing we needed was fill to make a level trail behind the wood steps. We had two buckets, so Laurie and Suzanne drove the car over to the gravel pile on the fire road, filled the buckets, drove back and carried the buckets down to the steps and

dumped them. I am sure it was hard work, but the gravel made great fill.

After lunch we moved the work crew down to the bottom of the hill to work on a real rocky area. We put in a few a few wood steps, but more rock steps. We got one huge boulder in place just before the Roanoke College group left. A few minutes later Laurie and Suzanne went up to the truck for a few things. About that time a man came along and said I thought that I recognized your dog. I said the dog owner was not here right now. He said I thought it was a dog named Mac for McAfee. I said it is. He wanted to see Laurie, so I told him where she was. In a few minutes they were back and Laurie introduced him as Bruce and said he would work with us. I gave Bruce and Laurie the task of digging out another huge boulder that we wanted to move, while Malcolm and I finished the tasks that we were working on. After Malcolm and I came up to help them, it took us about an hour to get the rock moved about 3 feet and set in the trail the way we wanted it. One thing is for sure, it won't come out any time soon. After, that it was time to pack up and leave. We felt that we had done a good day's work and we had finished everything I had planned to do on that hill.

Sunday, April 14, 2002, 1:00 PM
Carvins Cove Boat launch to Cemetery

Linda Akers (Leader), Sue Scanlin (Assistant), Bobbie Sticher, Jean Warren, Rod Liebl, Georgia Gallaher, Jay Ribble, Joyce Fisher, Patti, Kendra & Jennifer, Rick, Kristin & Erika Wiseley, and Guests: Marianne Demkó, Nita Austin and Jaime Piccininni

Most of the group met at the Cove parking area (which requires a parking permit available on-site). Everyone got acquainted while waiting for various hikers to arrive, register, park, and get ready to hit the trail. Rod had already biked the route earlier, and was ready to go it again, on foot. It was a hot muggy day, with the cove's water level miserably low. After taking a break at the old cemetery (with a fresh gravesite), we walked on down to the shore, where Jean couldn't resist cooling her tootsies in the water. We debated walking the shoreline back to the boat landing, but decided it would add too many miles to the hike, although there was a refreshing

breeze there. Very few spring wildflowers along this trail.

Arrived back at the picnic area to find that Joyce and her family had returned (or never left ???) there for snacks. Everyone was accounted for, and departed for home after a pleasant outing.

**Sunday, April 21, 2002, 8:00 AM
Mau-Hau Trail & Three Ridges Loop**

Rained out.

**Sunday, April 21, 2002, 1:00 PM
Montvale Overlook to
Bobblets Gap & back**

Rained out.

**Saturday, April 27, 2002, 7:30 AM
RT 615 to RT 623 (Bland County)**

Jimmy Whitney (leader), Dave Leaman (assistant), Bob Bush, Laura Montague

The hike started about 11:15AM and immediately commenced with the first of a dozen stream crossings. We had elected to skip the High Water Trail, thinking "Haven't we been in a drought?" Boy, were we surprised. It took quite a bit of careful rock stepping to avoid getting wet. Thanks to the pairs of hiking sticks we were able to share, everyone made it ok, almost unscathed. We also began to encounter many thru-hikers, some with foreign accents. By days-end, we met as many northbounders as we did stream crossings--the last 3 using their brand new Sony sports radios attached to their arms. The Wal-Mart in Marion was a big hit with these folks. While we did manage to see lots of colorful wildflowers, sadly we could only identify jack-in-the-pulpit near the end of the hike. We did enjoy a lovely view of Burkes Garden less than 1/2 mile from the end.

**Sunday, April 28, 2002, 1:00 PM
Trillium Hike-Flat Top**

Ed Wallace (leader), Maurice Turner (assistant), Blake Mitnick, Amy and Will Porubsky, Jeanne Duddy, Martha Crockett

Great day for a hike! Lightning, thunder, rain, hail, and oh yes, a tornado. What more could we ask for? Before all hell broke loose, we did see some turkeys and also trillium, Jack in the pulpit,

Dutchman's breeches, toothwort, lousewort, and wild ginger.

Due to the lightning we turned around before reaching the top, but not soon enough to keep from getting soaking wet on the return. The Parkway was covered with ice in several places near Boblett's Gap. New green leaves from the trees were downed looking like spinach on the road. What a mess!

**Sunday, May 5, 2002, 9:00 AM
NBATC / RATC Joint Hike
Belle Cove-Little Rocky Row**

RATC members: Dave Wickersham (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Larry Austin, Gary Hale, Laura Montague and guest Dave Socky and NBATC members: John Venable (leader), Stanley Chiang, Nancy Anthony.

The trip got off to a disorderly start as the Roanoke group responded to a last-minute request from the Lynchburg folks by bumping up the meeting time by one hour. However, somehow the Lynchburg folks never got the word that we made the change so they showed up after we had already set "plan B" in motion and set up our own shuttle. This worked out well as they also had made a spur-of-the-moment decision to set their shuttle for a shorter hike than the original itinerary.

At long last we set out from the Belle Cove trailhead on State Highway 501 near Glasgow. This trail has not been maintained since a devastating localized flood destroyed it in 1995. For the first four miles we made slow progress as we alternated between walking in the streambed, remnants of the old trail and some easy bushwhacking. Eventually we reached a point above the flood damage where we could follow the faint remains of the old trail without any problems. This section was about a mile in length and led us to the top of the ridge where we intersected the AT at Salt Log Gap.

We rested after the climb, snacked, chatted and then parted ways with the NBATC crew. They took the trail down the other side of the ridge to the old Hercules plant for a total trip length of around 9 miles.

Our group set off south down the AT. This is a beautiful section of trail and well maintained. We cruised along for about 3.5 miles to Fuller Rocks where we paused to admire the spectacular view looking east along the James River corridor.

Shortly we turned onto the Rocky Row Trail, (formerly known as the Little Rocky Row Trail), and followed it 3 miles to our shuttle vehicle. Overall we covered about 11.5 miles. I think we all agreed that seeing the flood damage was interesting but it's not a section most of us would want to hike again. The AT and Rocky Row portions of the hike, on the other hand, were great and are highly recommended.

I will try to find time to post the trip photos on the internet. Hopefully I can have that done by the time you read this. The URL will be:
www.peakseeker.com/ratc/index.html

**Sunday, May 5, 2002, 1:00 PM
 Fire Pink Hike-Rock Castle Creek**

Linda Akers (leader), Bobbie Sticher (assistant), Mervin & Blanche Brower, Ralph Hart, Georgia Gallaher, Jimmy Ribble, Don Lawhorn, Sherry Kessell

We met at Cave Spring Corners at 1:00 and headed up 221 to Floyd, then took Route 8 to the trailhead at the bottom of Rock Castle Gorge. Blake Mitnick met us there, but continued his trek back to the top of the gorge. It was a pleasant walk through the valley alongside the stream and past the old homestead there. Lots of time for conversation and looking for wildflowers. We saw fire pinks, trillium (toadshade & pink), Solomon's seal, violets, garlic mustard, squaw root, cinquefoil, buttercups, Jack in the pulpit, star chickweed, May apple, showy orchis and sweet cicely.

At the end of the gorge, we retraced our steps and headed for home.

**Sunday, May 12, 2002, 9:30 AM
 Apple Orchard Falls - Cornelius Creek Loop**

John Lynham (leader), Ed Wallace (assistant), Karl Kunkel, Gary Bible, Dana Helsley, Gene Downs, Blake Mitnick

It was a warm day, and whenever we found a little breeze, it was appreciated. The falls was impressive even though there hadn't been much rain. Wildflowers were out, with Bleeding Heart being one of the nicer discoveries. Our violet expert found many examples of the "Damn Blue" variety. The heat had one of the hikers mumbling about a hornet's nest that no one else saw.

**Sunday, May 12, 2002, 1:00 PM
 Falls Ridge Loop**

Maurice Turner (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde (assistant), Zetta Campbell

We carpoled from Orange Market to the parking area at Falls Ridge and hiked around the falls and then did the loop. There were lots of spider wort in bloom. We finished the hike just as thunder and lightning rolled in.

**Saturday, May 18, 2002, 6:00 AM.
 Old Rag**

No report yet.

**Sunday, May 19, 2002, 8:00 AM
 Sugar Run Gap Workhike**

Charles Parry (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Keith Wiggers, Mark Layton, Heather Townsend, Dana Helsley

Our job for the day was to reblaze two sections of the AT, as well as clip and clear blowdowns on one of them. We drove to the trailhead near Doc's Knob Shelter where a crew consisting of Keith, Mark and I began work with Mark clipping, Keith blazing and me scraping and carrying a chainsaw. The others drove the vehicles back, leaving one at Sugar Run Gap and continuing to Big Horse Gap where they headed north reblazing and clipping. I had instructed them to keep track of the location of the blowdowns and we would get them later as that part of the trail is quite close to the road. I thought one tank of chainsaw gas would get us to Sugar Run Gap and it did, but barely. I think the last cut was

made on gas fumes. Keith and I arrived at Sugar Run Gap with no sign of the other crew. Before we got to No Business Creek Road, we met a hiker who told us they weren't too far ahead. We met shortly after crossing the road. They informed us there were several blowdowns ahead, but they were all concentrated in one area. After returning to Sugar Run Gap, where we had a quick lunch, Kris took Dana and myself up to my truck to get more chainsaw gas. Dana and I went after the blowdowns, while Kris went back after the others. By the time they got down to where we were, we had the blowdowns almost cleared.

Next it was on down to Dismal Creek where we decided to split into three blazing crews of two each. Dana and Keith started at the south end of the Ribble Trail and headed south. After spotting my truck, the rest of us drove to the next access point where we all started with Kris and Heather going south, while Mark and I went north. In about an hour, we met Keith and Dana a bit south of our egress road. After walking back to it we drove back to Kris' car, picked it up and drove to Dismal Falls. As Kris and Heather had not come out, we hiked up to the AT where we met them.

We hiked out and called it a day at about 5:30. We had done a good day's work, met several thru-hikers and enjoyed the pink and flaming azaleas, both of which were in full bloom. It had taken three years, but we finally had all of the AT south of Pearisburg reblazed.

Keith, Mark and Heather (Krank'n, Mov'n and Birch) are thru-hiker friends of the Witchers, who took a day off to help with trail work. We would have never got all this done without them. Many thanks to them.

**Sunday, May 26, 2002, 1:00 PM
Lady Slipper Hike
Bearwallow Gap to Little Cove Mtn Trail**

Gary Adams (substitute leader), Sue Scanlin (assistant), Jean Warren, Mary Lou Gaminde, Mary Green, Georgia Gallaher, Sarah Burns, Sherry Kessel, and guests: Pat Green, Jimmy Ribble, Jessica Crews, Lisa Mayhew, and Marianne Demkó

Since Zetta had to bow out of leading this hike, Gary was drafted as her substitute because he

knows the trail well. He was waiting for us (the convoy from Market Square East got separated which caused some delay) at the trail head and under his expert leadership, no other mishaps occurred. The Mountain Laurel and Rhododendron along the way were in full bloom and splendor. Not so for the Lady Slippers. It wasn't until about a mile into the hike that the first one was spotted and altogether fewer than ten were seen in bloom. Many more had their blossoms turn brown or drop off already. Marianne's close inspection revealed that they had suffered frost damage - most likely during the recent cold spell - and died off prematurely. Gary took us a little ways past the turnaround point to show us a beautiful view towards the next ridge over and beyond. On the return, Marianne was rewarded for her diagnosis of the death of the Lady Slippers with the sighting of some fungi, marshmallow-like in looks but not in weight, growing on azaleas. A very enjoyable hike and what an opportunity for Sherry to show off the beautiful Roanoke area to her out-of-town visitors!

Wendell Phillips Boitnott, 79, of Boones Mill, left his beloved family, farm and mountains to be with the Lord on Monday, May 6, 2002. Wendell was a retired farmer and fruit grower whose love of the outdoors led him to climb the highest mountain and explore the deepest cave. He was active for many years in the Boones Mill Rescue Squad and Fire Department and was a Scout Leader and lifelong member and deacon of Cedar Bluff Church of the Brethren. With a child's curiosity and a sparkle in his eyes, this gentle man led many friends and family over trails, rocks, creeks, mountains and caves. His most recent interests included helping to clear land for local greenways and building hiking trails as a member of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club. We will miss him.

From obituary in The Roanoke Times, May 8, 2002

Hike Schedule (Cont.)

**Sunday, August 25, 2002, 8:00 AM
113-mile #13, Ribble Trail to Lickskillet Hollow**

14 miles, moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
Kenny Garrett 890-8946. Maurice Turner 334-2128

**Sunday, August 25, 2002, 1:00 PM
Smartview Loop on Parkway**

3 miles easy, \$3.00 carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165, Lucien Metayer 344-1877

Labor Day Weekend

Friday, August 30, 4:00 PM through
Monday, September 2, 12:00 Noon
Southern Region Multi-Club Meet

Host: The Mount Rogers Appalachian Trail Club
Place: U.S. Forest Service Hurricane Campground
Fee: \$5.00 / Adult – pre-registration not required.
Bring chairs, tent, maybe a bike for VA Creeper Trail
Contact: Kitty Farley 276-676-3040,
kittyjack_98@yahoo.com
RATC Contact: Jim Hutchings 427-4536

**Saturday, September 7, 2002, 8:30 AM
RT. 460 to Rice Fields, Peters Mtn.**

8 miles, moderate to strenuous, \$3.50 carpool fee
Zetta Campbell 366-8165, Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

**Sunday, September 8, 2002, 1:00 PM
Bottom Creek Gorge**

5 miles, easy, \$2.50 carpool fee
Sue Scanlin 989-0497, Jean Warren 384-6229

**Sunday, September 15, 8:00 AM
Mt. Rogers**

8 to 10 miles, \$4.50 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

**Sunday, September 15, 2002, 1:00 PM
Jennings Creek to Bryant Shelter**

7 miles, moderate to strenuous, \$3.00 carpool fee
Mervin and Blanche Brower 387-9732

**Sunday, September 22, 2002, 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain Workhike**

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

**Sunday, September 22, 2002, 1:00 PM
Dragon's Tooth**

5 miles, strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee
Linda Akers 776-1969, Kenny Garrett 890-8946

**Sunday, September 29, 2002, 8:00 AM
Rockfish Gap to Jarmine Gap,
Shenandoah National Park**

8 miles, moderate to strenuous, \$5.00 carpool fee
Bobbie Sticher 890-2140,
H.R. Blankenship 776-3468

**Sunday, September 29, 2002, 1:00 PM
Cascades**

4 miles, easy, \$3.50 carpool fee
Sue Scanlin 989-0497, Terri McClure 375-2650

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

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

Names(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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