

# TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Fall 2010

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

### WORK HIKES

Sunday, October 17 - 8:00 AM  
Big Horse Gap

Sunday, November 14 - 8:00 AM  
Big Horse Gap

Sunday, December 12 - 8:00 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, October 18, 7:30 p.m.  
Hosted by *Roger Holnback*

Monday, November 29, 7:30 p.m.  
Hosted by *Bob Blankenbaker*

Dues are payable in January. The second line of your label should read 2010 or later or be blank. This is your last issue if you are not paid up. Please support the Club by paying your dues.

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

Christ Lutheran Church on the corner of  
Brandon Ave. and Grandin Rd.  
The Club will provide beverages and table  
service. Club members will provide a dish to  
share.

We will have a box at the door if you wish to  
bring a nonperishable food item to be donated  
to RAM House.

**Program: Mark McClain and Diana  
Christopoulos "The Yorkshire Dales and North  
Sea Coast - A walking Tour of Northeast  
England"**

## Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

*Judy & Ed Bradley*

*Cos Cosgrove*

*Hal Coleman*

*Ruth Green*

*Neville Harris*

*Cynthia Hutchison*

*Rhin James*

*Anne Krogenas*

*Michael Lasecki*

*Meredith & Jack Malloy*

*Vince & Lori Mier*

*Tim Mossick*

*Harry Reed*

*Pamela Welsh*

And we thank you for making donations:

*John C. Everett, Jr.*

*Kim Ferguson.*

*Donna Logan*

*Rob & Kay Saul*

*Jen Schaeffer*

*and Pamela Welsh*

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

*Bob Blankenbaker*

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## Trail Supervisor's Report

The second week of Konnarock turned out much different than we expected. Because of changes in the relocation plan, the Forest Service wanted more time to study the matter. Consequently, it may be 2 more years before we complete the relocation. That is fine with me. On the other hand, we only learned of this the day before the crew was coming, so we had to scramble to find work for the week. The trail going to Angel's Rest above the upper road still needed work, so it was decided to work there. The crew worked about ½ mile above the road, installing rock waterbars and steps. The club worked just above the road, replacing two switchbacks with one and installing several rock steps. This was good for me, as I did

not have too far to walk. We had 24 people work with the crew, but only 2, David and I, earned T-shirts.

In other news, the club now has 2 new Stihl heavy duty weed eaters. These are available for overseers to use on their trail sections. I have one and Mike Vaughn has the other. If you need to use one, give us a call and we will make arrangements for pickup.

I hope to be able to attend all the fall workhikes this fall as most of them will not require too much walking. See you there.

*Charles Parry*

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## Hikemaster's Report

Many RATC members have met club member Zetta Campbell on one of our hikes. She has been an active Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club member for an astounding 52 years! Some of the positions she has held with the club include secretary and trail section overseer. She has also led numerous hikes over the years. Some of her favorite hikes in the area include McAfee's Knob and Tinker Ridge. She particularly likes hiking on Flat Top Mountain when the trillium is in bloom

in April. Zetta has hiked in other parts of the country as well, including Colorado and New England.

There were several charter members of the club that were still active members back when Zetta first joined. These included Tom and Charlene Campbell (no relation), for whom the Campbell shelter on Catawba Mountain was named. Back then, hiking shoes were made solely out of leather.

They extended up to the calf. The only hiking sticks that were used were wooden sticks found in to the woods.

As you might have guessed, Zetta has been an active hiker all of her life. She used to regularly do hikes of up to 20 miles in a single day. She has done the hike on the A.T. from Daleville to Route 311 at least three times. She fondly remembers the moonlight hikes the club used to have regularly. She has done several backpack trips with other club members also.

Her most memorable club hike was the infamous "Frostbite Hike", which was done many years ago. This was a winter hike to Rocky Row and Fuller's Rocks, near the James River. Temperatures on

the day of the hike were well below freezing. Wind chills along the ridgeline were an estimated 40 below zero. The hardy few members on the hike realized they were in a tough spot and did not even stop for lunch. Some of the hikers actually sustained some frostbite, which luckily healed with no permanent damage. The RATC members back then were a very hardy breed!

Another club member, Jim Walke, has completed the section of the A.T. maintained by our club and has received a "113 Mile" patch. If you have completed all 113 miles, please let me know and I will send you out a patch, commemorating this accomplishment.

*Mike Vaughn*

## Hike Reports

### June 6, 2010 1:00PM Fulhardt Knob

Fred Walters (leader) & K-9 Cujo, Linda King (assistant), Mary Gilbert & K-9 Son, Sandra, Steve

The hike started with overcast skies and high humidity with heavy rain showers forecasted for late afternoon but our group of 5 hikers and 2 K-9s (Son & Cujo) was undaunted and determined to hike up to the Fulhardt Knob shelter in hopes of encountering a through hiker or two along the way. We weren't disappointed as we met more than a dozen hikers along the 7-mile hike. It was truly a pleasure to greet hikers who hailed from all over the US including North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, New York, Alabama, Montana, and Colorado. All seemed to be in good spirits and looking rejuvenated as they slowly made their way up the trail towards the shelter with bulging backpacks. A day's layover in Daleville seemed to do wonders for these seasoned backpackers who have been on the trail since mid-April.

Along the trail to the summit, Fred Walters discussed the history of the American chestnut tree and current efforts to re-establish this once magnificent tree to its original splendor before it was ravaged by the chestnut blight in the early

1900's. As we made our way up the ridge towards the shelter, Sandra, Linda, Steve and Mary kept a vigilant eye for American chestnut saplings growing along the trail. Hopefully foresters will have success in crossbreeding a blight resistant species and future generations will enjoy hikes up this ridge filled with towering chestnut trees!

As we descended the trail in the late afternoon, dark black clouds gathered along the southwest horizon and our pace to the parking lot sharpened. We arrived at the parking lot just in time to quickly enjoy homemade cookies and granola bars before the heavens opened up with a heavy downpour. I'm sure as each of us made our way home that evening to a hot meal and dry bed, each thought about those through hikers we had met earlier in the day still trudging up the mountain in those drenching rains and gained a new respect for this special breed of hiker.

### Sunday, June 13, 2010 8:00AM North Mountain Trail

Linda King, Fred Walters & Cujo (co-leaders), Carl Cornett, HR Blankenship, Hugh Hall & sidekick Rascal, Matt Bail, Maya Bohler, and Bob & Kris Peckman

A perfect June day! A gentle breeze traveled along with us, the sky was just so blue and a rain

the night before had left everything green and lush. Just kinda' made ya' happy to be alive and able to hike this mountain. Cujo, our co-leader, kept us moving along at a reasonable pace, nudging us along when we'd stop to wonder at a wild flower or to just take a breath. Beautiful day, good hiking companions, great hike!

**Sunday, June 13, 2010 1:00PM**

**Jenny Knob to Lickskillet Hollow, 113 Mile Hike 314**

Steve Tomaziefski (leader), Mary Gilbert and Diana Billips

We met initially at the Orange Market at 1:00 p.m. After a long drive down to Bland County we met Diana Billips of the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Club. We dropped off our vehicles at Lickskillet Hollow, loaded into Diana's vehicle and drove over to Jenny Knob, the starting point of the hike. It was a good day for a hike. Although there was a threat of rain all day we managed to beat the rain and finish the hike without getting wet.

We hiked at a steady non-stop pace. We didn't see many animals during the hike except for a fawn that was hiding in the brush alongside of the trail and suddenly took off when we approached. As we made our way over the wooded trail to Lickskillet Hollow, at times we could see the beautiful surrounding valleys and ridge lines.

Our excursion was short in duration lasting only about two and a half hours. An enjoyable time was had by the three souls that hiked the Appalachian Trail from Jenny Knob to Lickskillet Hollow.

**Sunday, June 20, 2010 8:00AM**  
**Wilson Mountain/Sprouts Run Loop**

John Merkwan (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Bob Peckman, Larry Austin, H.R. Blankenship, Fred Walters, Hugh Hall and his dog Rascal

After meeting at the Daleville commuter lot we linked up with Larry at the trailhead. There had been some light rain the evening prior so the foliage was wet but not enough to affect the stream level. This hike was true to its description: "Creekside walking with several nice cascading waterfalls, pools of water and huge trees of various species." It was a warm day so when we

stopped for lunch Rascal sent the leaves and dirt flying as he prepared an extra large cooling pit. As for the rest of us, we selected a nice rock and enjoyed the cooling breeze on top of Wilson Mountain. We did encounter some unwanted hitchhikers as a few ticks needed to be flicked away but all in all it was an enjoyable day in the forest. (Editor's note: John treated us to a taste of his prize-winning brew after the hike.)

**Sunday, June 20, 2010 1:30PM**  
**Harkening Hill – Beginners Hike**

Cancelled due to no response.

**Sunday, June 27, 2010 8:00AM**  
**Fairystone State Park Trails**

Cancelled due to low response and being too hot.

**Saturday & Sunday, July 3 & 4, 2010**  
**8:00AM**  
**Bluff City Relocation Work Hike**

Steve Burt, Matt Gentry, Colleen Gentry, Mervin Brower, Blanche Brower, Duncan Hollow, Judy Langenhorst, Alan Simpson, Fred Meyer, JoAnn Edmunds, Emily Meissel, Kris Peckman, Charles Parry, David Jones

Both Konnarock work weeks were to be spent building trail on a relocation from Bluff City up to Morris Road outside of Pearisburg. The first day Charles and David came to greet the trail crew bearing doughnuts. Parking on Morris Road to enable Charles to walk down hill to the work site, things seemed a bit quiet and deserted. Charles stopped where RATC had ceased work last year and David went down the hill to find the crew. Near the end of the relocation sure enough a hiker was walking up the hill. David called out a greeting to the crew and the response was an unexpected, "David, it is Duncan." This was RATC member Duncan Hollow who had come over from Lewisburg, WV. He was supposed to have met the trail crew at the bottom of the mountain—there was no trail crew!!!!???

The two climbed back up to where Charles was and dutifully the three started to dig. There is something almost profound to experience a group of people digging trail, as time passes new trail just seems to unroll behind you. When three

people dig trail, profundity is not one of the experiences. Rake, dig, talk, dig, chop, talk, dig, rake, look for profound trail unrolling—it ain't there.

Near noon a noise from the direction of the proposed trail route caused all to look up. It was Joe and Angie from the Blacksburg ATC office. The trail crew had decided to start work at the other end of the relocation...So, the three diggers packed up their tools, hiked up to Morris Road, drove the short distance to the Angel's Rest parking, and walked down to the crew digging trail. And there it was, gloriously, new trail was profoundly unrolling through the wood, hallelujah!

Unfortunately for the trail crew, the morning's dozen doughnuts had served as a surrogate for profound feelings so the white box from Blacksburg's Carol Lee Doughnuts was nearly empty.



The next day there was more and less of the same. There was less wondering where the trail crew was; there were more doughnuts, more RATC workers and more profundity—new trail unrolling in the woods.



During lunch on the fourth of July one person pulled a small flag from the depths of his pack. Yes, this is the eleventh item in the list of the ten essentials you should always have when in the woods. It was noted that another person had on a red t-shirt with white writing and blue jeans: a red white and blue flag bearer if ever there was one—yes, it was a profound moment.



At the close of the day the RATC and the Konnarock crew had built 800 feet of trail. Good job!

**Sunday, July 11, 2010 8:00AM  
Sinking Creek to Lee Hollow, 113 Mile Hike #8**

John Merkwana(leader), Maya Bohler (assistant), Sarah Cuthbertson, Mia Copeland, H.R. Blankenship, Fred Meyer and eight members of the Roanoke Outdoor and Social Club (ROSC).

This was a very interesting hike in a number of ways. This was a joint hike with the ROSC. Sarah is a member of both organizations and brought along eight ROSC members on this hike so there were plenty of new faces and voices on the trail. I started off doing my best to confuse everyone by requiring two extra cars for car pooling since the trail end point was only 18 miles away and the start point another 25 miles away. Enough said as I am confusing myself again: bottom line is it worked out well with nine hikers being able to return to Orange Market without waiting for shuttles.

This is a 10.4-mile hike but because all of the work (1,200' ascent of Sinking Creek Mountain) is at the beginning of the hike, it makes for a very pleasant hike. Just over ½ mile into the hike everyone was in awe of the giant oak tree we came across. It is so large it even has a name, the Keffer Oak. In case you are interested Here is link: <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/4H/remarkabletree/detail.cfm?AutofieldforPrimaryKey=1355> On top of the ridge we saw many piles of rocks which had everyone guessing as to their origins: ruins, stills, ovens, wells or projects to keep kids occupied. Most likely it is that early farmers had cleared the mountain top to plant an orchard and had piled up the rocks to make way for the trees. (Although I am still not entirely convinced.)



Shortly thereafter we stopped for lunch at the first batch of slanted rocks that offered great views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond. At lunch a through-hiker, trail name: Apocalypse, passed through and stopped to visit a bit. He was most appreciative of the apple pieces Maya offered. A banana was also offered and carefully tucked away for an afternoon treat. Everyone had a good chuckle when we stopped later at the Niday Shelter and saw that Apocalypse had recorded the act of banana kindness in the trail log at the shelter. After finishing the hike all enjoyed some ice cold lemonade and chilled watermelon that Maya had brought.



**Sunday, July 11, 2010 1:00PM  
Apple Orchard Falls, Cornelius Creek  
Loop**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders), Maurice Turner, Penelope Muelenaer, Carina Hughes and Kathy Brown

The hike started from Daleville commuter parking lot. We went in two cars to the start of the hike, FS road 59. The weather was in the high 80's. We met two hikers on the way up who had camped overnight. When we went across the connecting trail on the old fire road we saw a lot of Japanese stiltgrass. There were 2 blow downs across the trail, one going up and one going down. We stopped at the falls and had a snack. There was small amount of water going over the falls. We met several groups coming up to the falls on our way down.

**Saturday/Sunday, July 17/18, 2010  
9:00AM**

**Mount Rogers Overnight Backpack**

Mike (leader) & Sheila Vaughn, Dan Phlegar, Jeff Armstrong, Matt Bail, Matthew Burnett, and Kevin & Xinia Fuccella



After several stops along the way we made it onto the trail around noon. It was forecast to be in the high nineties in Roanoke, but due to the 5,000'+ elevation of the Mt. Rogers high country, the temperature only got up to the mid eighties along the trail. We made steady progress up the trail. Several in the group had never been in this area of the country and were very impressed by the open vistas. We made it to the camp site and set up camp before heading out the last 1.5 miles to the summit of Mt. Rogers. While there are no views from Mt. Rogers, the spruce and moss-covered forest floor make this a worthwhile spot to visit. At over 5,700 feet, it is the highest point in Virginia. After dinner we all went up to Wilburn Ridge to watch the setting sun. A herd of grazing wild ponies below us and immense views of the high country made it a memorable experience. Around 10:00 p.m. we were rocked by a heavy thunderstorm. We were in our tents by then and most of us made it through fairly dry. The trip out the next morning was uneventful.

**Saturday, July 24, 2010 11:00AM  
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee  
Knob – Beginner Hike**

Cancelled.

**Sunday, August 1, 2010 8:00AM  
Catawba Mountain ( Rt. 311 ) to Andy  
Layne Trail ( Rt. 779 ) 113-Mile Hike #4**

Diana Christopulos (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Matt Bail, Mia Copeland, Sandra Cothran, Carina Hughes, Carol McPeak, Mark Taylor

This large group had a lot of fun on a misty, foggy, cool day. We shared Michael Vaughn's news that the stretch from Highway 311 to Daleville was listed in a recent Backpacker magazine as one of the 100 best local hikes in the U.S.

Steve Tomaziefski, our fearless trip leader, had a knee problem and only got to do the paperwork for this trip, signing everyone in at Orange Market. Meanwhile the assistant leader and Mark McClain dropped a car at the Andy Layne trail to save some time, spotting a small group of deer and two wild turkey hens with young 'uns along the road.

Earlier in the week we had worried about temperatures in the 90s, then switched to concerns about thunderstorms. Thankfully, we got fog and temperatures in the 60s, though the humidity did give the hike a rainforest aspect. We all slogged through, carrying twice as much water as we needed and sweating out plenty.

Carl and H.R. graciously set the pace, waiting for us at several points. One thing about a foggy day on McAfee Knob – you don't have a lot of company. Carl led us down to Devil's Kitchen, reminding us of the devilish feasts we have enjoyed there on several New Year's Day trips. These discussions ignited Diana's hunger, and the group agreed to stop for lunch at Campbell Shelter where we debated the existence of local wild cougars and the relative merits of shotguns and pepper spray for Alaskan grizzly bear encounters.

Diana had not done this hike in several years and foolishly told some of the new hikers that the stretch from Campbell Shelter to Tinker Cliffs was "easy." Note to future hikers: it does have a lot of uphill climbing. But also even more beautiful rock formations than McAfee Knob.

Group members kept talking about the likelihood of muddy, slippery, nasty ground on the Andy Layne Trail, but it was not bad at all.

**Saturday & Sunday, August 5 - 9, 2010  
8:00AM**

### **Bluff City Relocation Work Hike**

Mervin Brower, Blanche Brower, Judy Langenhorst, Ron Reese, David Foster, Bill Gordge, Jim Roberson, Jim Lewis, Maurice Turner, Hugh Scruggs, Eddie Baldwin, Kris Peckman, Neville Harris, Britney Booth, Emily Meissel, Charles Parry, David Jones

The day before the Konnarock crew was scheduled to arrive, Joe from the Blacksburg ATC office informed us that there could be no digging anywhere on the relocation. To receive approval to begin a large relocation there is a lengthy process of reviews which must be completed. During the last Konnarock week, significant changes were made to the approved flagged route. These changes required new reviews, and so it may be another two years before we can resume work on this project.....



Charles Parry did not hesitate a moment and quickly decided that we would work in the same general location; instead of building new trail we would rehabilitate old trail on the way up to Angel's Rest. The Mid Week crew came out the first day and put in a new switchback with several rock steps. They did excellent work as always.

In the remaining days, the RATC volunteers toiled away repairing old steps and constructing new ones. Charles was there directing the feeble to work together to relocate such rocks that the muscle man of years ago, Charles Atlas, would have shuddered at the suggestion of moving. Many references were made to having a long enough lever, one could move the world. And so with rock bar levers, we did our part to move the

side of Pearis Mountain.

The work ended on Sunday as five exhausted people finished moving a BIG rock UPHILL to the trail. With energy and motivation depleted, there was no effort to place this rock as a step. All agreed, that digging would be the first project of the next work trip to this area.

Dirty and tired, the end of the Konnarock week was bitter-sweet. We were able to take care of several small miscellaneous projects, but we built no new trail on the relocation, and I (David Jones), for one, am disappointed.



**Sunday, August 8, 2010 1:00PM  
Cascades**

Karen Callahan (leader)

Eight hikers from the Roanoke area met at the Orange Market and drove over to the VT campus in Blacksburg where I met them. We proceeded to the Cascades parking lot, which we found to be completely full. Cars were parked in every available spot, and there was even a tour bus parked on the grass along the road. Work is being

done to improve the Upper Trail, the one on the left side of Little Stony Creek, but on Sunday, work is stopped and hikers are allowed to use this trail. We hiked up to the falls on the Lower Trail and returned using the Upper Trail. The falls were beautiful, even though there was significantly less water than at the beginning of the summer.

**Sunday, August 15, 2010 1:00PM  
Bennett Springs Loop**

Fred Walters (leader) with K-9 "Cujo", Mary Gilbert with K-9 "Son", Hugh Hall with K-9 "Rascal", Carina Hughes

The 6 mile loop hike started under overcast skies, temperatures in the 90's and very high humidity. Rain showers were forecasted later in the afternoon making it a typical summer hike. Our group of 4 hikers and 3 K-9s (Rascal, Son & Cujo) started the climb up the Trough trail enjoying the warm summer breeze, and pleasant scenery abounding the Carvin's Cove area.

All was about to change mid-way through the hike when dark foreboding clouds appeared along the western horizon and quickly made their way eastward. Then it happened. We were literally enveloped in a drenching downpour for the remainder of the hike. The trail quickly turned into a drainage channel for the monsoon type rains. Luckily, the rain was warm and actually refreshing as we trekked down the flooded trail. Arriving back at our starting point, everyone was in good spirits but thoroughly soaked. No complaints, just a memorable hiking experience had by all attending.

**Sunday, August 22, 2010 8:00AM  
Catawba Mtn. (Rt 311) to Trout Creek (Rt 620)**

Linda King and Fred Meyer (leaders), HR Blankenship, John Merkwan, Steve Bowles, Sandra Cothran, and Ivy Lidstone

This was a joint hike with the Roanoke Outdoor and Social Club. We had a total of about 13 hikers. This is a tough hike and the day was very hot. We did, however, have a great hike. (Ed. note: It would be nice to work closer with the O. & S Club to include their names and maybe some input from them.)

**Sunday, August 22, 2010 1:00PM  
Flat Top Mountain**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders), Steven Tomaziefski, Rita Krasnow, Mary Gilbert, Salley & R. Noble

The hike started from Market Square East on route 460. We met people at Market Square East and 2 people at the visitor center at the Peaks. We did not car pool because of dogs and people living closer to the peaks. We should probably move our meeting point down the road to Kroger's as it is getting difficult to get out from Market Square East. The weather was in the low 80's, sunny with high humidity which meant we sat a lot. We had two people turn around half way up due to the heat. When we reached the top we had a very clear day and the view was very spectacular with all the green from the recent rains.

**Sunday, August 29, 2010 8:00AM  
Hoop Hole, Upper/Lower Figure 8 Loop**

Steve Tomaziefski (leader), H R Blankenship, John Merkwan, David Wickersham, Carina Hughes, and Anne Hanna

We met and departed the Daleville Park and Ride at 8:00 a.m. We arrived at the Hoop Hole trail head at approximately 8:30 a.m., where met Anne Hanna. The sky was clear and there was no threat of rain all day. It was a nice day for a hike. In the morning the temperature was in the lower 70's but by the time we finished both the lower and upper loops the temperature was in the lower 90's. In the Hoop Hole parking lot was a hunter waiting on his son who was out in the Jefferson National Forest trying to tree a bear. As we moved up the trail we never did see any sign of the bear or the hunter.

The trail on the lower loop had been recently worked on as evident by new yellow blaze trail markers and the trail being clear of fallen trees. The upper trail in some parts was overgrown with brush and there were many large fallen trees over the trail. During the hike we noticed many mushrooms in an assortment of different colors such as: White, tan, brown, and a few with reddish caps.

We hiked at a steady pace for about three miles, and then we took approximately a 15-minute break

at a hunter's camp site. We took a few more short breaks along the trail to the top of the upper loop. As we trudged on through the beautiful woods we got glimpses of the surrounding mountains. At the 6-mile mark we stopped for an abbreviated lunch break at the summit of the trail.

We hiked down the upper loop to the lower loop in order to complete the figure eight trail. Once back on the lower loop we crossed over a small stream several times on our way back to the parking lot. I believe everyone had a good time.

**Saturday, September 4, 2010 11:00AM  
Seven Mile Mountain Beginner Hike**

Zetta M. Campbell (Leader), Desiree Cox, Reinhard (George) O'Neill, JoAnn Edmunds, Sharon Rippee

This trail is a few miles north of New Castle, and is an old trail worked on and opened up by Bill Gordge's Wednesday group. About a year ago they went back and did some needed maintenance work on it. It is a pretty area.

It was a pleasant sunny day with just the right temperature. North of New Castle we took a left off Route 311, onto Route 658, then Route 632 to where the trail ends, for this was to be a car switch. There was the hiker sign to mark the trail. There's only a little room to leave cars. We left the leader's car there and proceeded to where the trail started. As a clue there is a brown sign across the road from the trail which has nothing to do with the trail. But we missed it because the leader didn't spot it because of where she was in the car. So, we drove on and had to come back. This time we saw it and drove into the parking area which is a good size for cars. Since it is not paved it is harder to see. There we found the trail with the sign and set off. A hiker sign at the road would help a great deal to find the place.

It was a good trail. The yellow blazes were worn and a little dim, but visible. There were many mushrooms, some of them quite pretty. We found two blowdowns which presented no problem. After some fairly minor ups and downs, we reached the top and the ridge. There we discussed whether to go on or go back. It had taken two hours to hike about two miles. Could we finish by sunset? It had taken extra time to find the

beginning, and the leader did not have the pace her followers had. We decided to go back. It took us less time, since there were fewer downhills. Then it was on to the end of the trail to get the leader's car, and we went our separate ways. The leader turned her car over to Sharon who likes to drive it and---watch out when you do that. Sharon wanted to go exploring to find where the AT crosses in the area and so, the three of us did, for Desiree was with us. Yes, we found it, but did not hike it. There was still daylight and we really thought we could have done the whole thing, Oh well, we can do it another time.

**Sunday, September 12, 2010 8:00AM  
Salt Log Gap to Seely/Woodworth Shelter  
via Lovington Spring Trail**

John Merkwon (leader), Maya Bohler (assistant), H.R. Blankenship, Gary Bible, and Ivy Lidstone

After meeting at the Daleville P & R we all jumped into my car and headed to the trail head which is just north of the Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area. The journey out and back was full of lively conversation as the three riders in the back seat became very close during the trip (my back seat cants the outside passengers toward the middle) especially taking the turns on Route 60 where we went up and over the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Lovington Springs Trail was notable due to all of ferns that were covering the area throughout its 2.7 mile length. Some good natured ribbing was also in store as I had incorrectly identified the trail as the Livingston Springs Trail. At one point we were crossing a marshy stream bed when I heard Ivy shout out that she had found some turtle heads! How could I have missed this when I had just passed that area? The little boy in me quickly took over as I walked briskly back to the stream bed only to discover there weren't any headless turtles, nor even turtle heads but there were "turtlehead" flowers which I found out inhabit stream banks and bloom from July-September.

While stopping for lunch at the Seely/Woodworth shelter a south bound thru-hiker came to the shelter. He said he was one of the early starters (from Maine) and was enjoying the trip very much and planned to complete his journey by the end of October. He later passed us on the trail and an offer was made to join us for some peaches that

Maya had brought for a treat after our hike. He thought it over a bit and said he needed to keep going so he moved on but the thought of those peaches must have overcome his need for speed as we found him waiting for us at Salt Log Gap where we had parked the car. After enjoying peaches, lemonade and cookies, he gave us a "Trail Angel" thanks which made our outing even more special.

The 7.2 mile hike started with absolutely perfect weather conditions; temperatures in the low 80's, very low humidity and a nice cool westerly breeze. Our group of 5 hikers and 2 K-9s (Son & Cujo) started the 1500' ascent up the Andy Layne trail enjoying the cool Indian summer breeze, and diverse scenery abounding along the trail. We were surprised to see so many other hikers taking advantage of the beautiful weather as well. Many had brought their K-9s along to enjoy the day.

**Sunday, September 12, 2010 1:00PM  
Andy Layne Trail to Tinker Cliffs**

Fred Walters (leader) with K-9 "Cujo", Mary Gilbert with K-9 "Son", Karen Callahan, Mike Marinos, Bob Blankenbaker

On the top of Tinker Cliffs, we were provided a vantage point to see for miles in all directions. The cool breeze and cloudless sky hinted to the fact that Fall weather was right around the corner. Just a gorgeous day to be out and about hiking.

**Hike Schedule**

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

For the most part, we rate our hikes as follows:  
Easy – 3 to 5 miles; good trails or old roads; modest elevation changes.

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

19.5 miles, Strenuous, \$2.50 carpool fee  
27 miles from Roanoke

We will be doing a long hike south on the A.T. from Bearwallow Gap, near the town of Buchanan

in Botetourt County, to Route 11 in Troutville. This will be mainly level ridgeline hiking with one long ascent of Fullhardt Knob, near the end of the hike.

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

**Kenny Garrett.....293-7967**

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

6.0 miles, Easy, no carpool fee  
 0 miles from Roanoke

Walk the popular Roanoke River Greenway from its western Roanoke City terminus to Rivers Edge Park, with a side trip for lunch or beverages at Fork in the Alley, then return to the starting point.

Highlights include new greenway features: Vic Thomas Park, Wasena pedestrian bridge, new low-water bridge.

**Diana Christopulos.....387-0930**  
**Mark McClain .....355-6526**  
 or [mclainmark@comcast.net](mailto:mclainmark@comcast.net)

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

7.3 miles, Moderate, \$2.50 carpool fee  
 23 miles from Roanoke

This hike will be on the A.T. from the Sunset Field overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway to Petites Gap on the BRP. This hike has wonderful views from Thunder Ridge Overlook and Apple Orchard Mountain, which has a large grassy bald at its summit. This route is also known for the Guillotine, a rock formation, where the trail passes under a suspended rock. There is also a beautiful series of over 100 rock steps installed by the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club along the trail immediately past the Guillotine.

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

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

0.5 miles, Moderate, \$6.00 carpool fee  
 71 miles from Roanoke

We will be doing rock work installing rock steps and general trail rehabilitation on the trail near Big Horse Gap on Sugar Run Mountain in Giles County.

**Dave Jones..... 540-552-3058**  
**Mike Vaughn.....992-1350**  
 or [mikeva999@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeva999@yahoo.com)

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

11.1 miles, Strenuous , \$6.00 carpool fee  
 65 miles from Roanoke

This hike begins on the BRP near MP 29 and Montebello. Primarily a ridge walk along Whetstone Ridge, but the South Mountain section has a series of hilltops in its section. Trail comes out onto Irish Creek Road (SR 603). There will be a 15 mile shuttle between trailheads.

**John Merkwan.....904-2299**  
**Kris Peckman.....366-7780**

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

9.9 miles, Strenuous, \$6.00 carpool fee  
 71 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County, this hike follows scenic Dismal Creek before starting a steep climb up Sugar Run Mountain. The hike then follows the ridgeline for several miles, offering excellent views of the Wilburn Valley.

**Mike Vaughn.....992-1350**  
 or [email mikeva999@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeva999@yahoo.com)  
**Rushdat Hale.....309-7263**

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

4.4 miles, Easy, no carpool fee  
 5 miles from Roanoke

This will be an out and back walk on the Wolf Creek Greenway in Roanoke County and the town of Vinton, near William Byrd High School.

**Sue Scanlin .....989-0497**

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

8.7 miles, Strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee  
 38 miles from Roanoke.

Start point is the Sulphur Springs trailhead. We will proceed up to Petites Gap via the Glenwood Horse Trail (GHT) to link up with the AT. We will then hike 2.7 miles north on the AT to the Sulphur Spring Trail intersection. At this point we have an option for an additional 2 or 4.4 mile loop before

returning back to the car via the Sulphur Spring Trail.

The GHT segment begins with a ½ mile road walk on FS 35 followed by a short scramble across Elk Creek to access GHT. This section of GHT is mostly uphill and sees limited use as it exits back onto FS35 ½ mile short of Petites Gap.

**John Merkwan.....904-2299**

**Fred Meyer ..... 304-744-9219**

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

10.6 miles, Strenuous, \$5.00 carpool fee  
43 miles from Roanoke

The hike will start on the Blue Ridge Parkway and will go north on the A.T., passing the Lynchburg Reservoir near the halfway point. The last three miles of the hike will be along Brown Creek. There used to be a pioneer community along the creek and several foundations can still be seen.

**Kris Peckman.....366-7780**

**Lois Smith .....862-7370**

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

6.9 miles, Moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee  
16 miles from Roanoke

This hike is located in Botetourt County. From Black Horse Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway, elevation 2,400 feet, the trail heads south. There are limited views on this section of trail. In 2.4 miles a blue blaze trail on the right leads to the Wilson Creek Shelter. After crossing Wilson Creek, the trail ascends steeply. It then descends steadily and crosses Curry Creek. From there it ascends steeply on switchbacks to the Salt Pond Road road crossing. Go left on Salt Pond Road for 0.9 miles back to BRP.

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

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

4.0 miles, Easy, \$.00 carpool fee  
0 miles from Roanoke

The Murray Run Greenway is an easy footpath with some ups and downs between Grandin Road and Virginia Western Community College, much of it in an urban "wilderness". Our walk will include Shrine Hill Park, Woodland Park, and side trails along Murray Run in Fishburn Park. After our walk, enjoy lunch or beverages at All Sports Cafe near the trailhead.

**Diana Christopulos.....387-0930**

**Mark McClain .....355-6526**  
**or mcclainmark@comcast.net**

**Sunday, November 14, 2010 8:00AM  
Big Horse Gap Work Hike**

5 miles, Moderate, \$6.00 carpool fee  
71 miles from Roanoke

We will be doing rock work installing rock steps and general trail rehabilitation on the trail near Big Horse Gap on Sugar Run Mountain in Giles County.

**Dave Jones..... 540-552-3058**

**Kris Peckman.....366-7780**

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

8.9 miles, Strenuous, \$.50 carpool fee  
6 miles from Roanoke

The hike begins at the 311 A.T. parking lot – just 15 minutes from Roanoke. The Appalachian Trail is followed south over the many humps of Catawba Mountain before dropping down to the open fields of Beckner’s Gap. Between Routes 785 and 624, the trail crosses Sandstone Ridge. Beyond 624 the trail heads uphill past the Boy Scout Trail. It then reaches Rawie’s Rest, a knife-like rocky outcrop, with good views. Continue on to Lost Spectacles Gap, where a blue-blazed trail on the right leads down to the Dragon’s Tooth parking lot.

**Fred Walters .....977-1430**

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

**Sunday, November 21, 2010 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. The trail was built by the mid-week work crew and was opened last year. There are good views of McAfee Knob from the summit of the mountain.

**John Miller** .....375-3250  
or **John.miller591@comcast.net**

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

8.1 miles, Moderate, \$2.50 carpool fee  
27 miles from Roanoke

We will be doing a long hike south on the A.T. from Bearwallow Gap, near the town of Buchanan in Botetourt County to Black Horse Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**Kenny Garrett**.....293-7967  
**Rushdat Hale**.....309-7263

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

**Christ Lutheran Church on the corner of  
Brandon Ave. and Grandin Rd.  
The Club will provide beverages and table  
service. Club members will provide a dish to  
share.**

**We will have a box at the door if you wish to  
bring a nonperishable food item to be  
donated to RAM House.**

**Program: Mark McClain and Diana  
Christopulos "The Yorkshire Dales and  
North Sea Coast - A walking Tour of  
Northeast England"**

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

9.9 miles, Strenuous , \$5.00 carpool fee  
39 miles from Roanoke

The hike is in the James River Face Wilderness located in Bedford and Rockbridge County. It roughly parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway. After a stiff climb to Highcock Knob (3073') it's a pleasant downward trending hike to James River (678') with occasional views to the west and grand finale on the James River Foot Bridge, longest foot-travel-only bridge on the AT.

**Lois Smith** .....862-7370  
**Maya Bohler**.....344-6588  
or **mayabohler@cox.net**

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

5.5 miles, Moderate, \$.00 carpool fee  
0 miles from Roanoke

We will use a series of trails to do a loop hike on Mill Mountain. We will hike the Star Trail to the Roanoke star, then take the Watchtower trail to the Mill Mountain Greenway. From there we will take the Monument trail to the Star Trail back to the trail head on Riverland Road.

**Sue Scanlin** .....989-0497

**Saturday, December 11, 2010 10:00AM  
Lick Run Greenway**

8.0 miles, Moderate, \$.00 carpool fee  
0 miles from Roanoke

The Lick Run Greenway is a paved trail that connects Valley View with downtown Roanoke. This walk features a favorite birding area adjacent to Lick Run, Washington Park, Hotel Roanoke, and Martin Luther King monument & pedestrian bridge. We'll walk downtown from Valley View, take a break for lunch at a downtown eatery and/or shopping at the Farmer's Market, then return to our starting point.

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

**Sunday, December 12, 2010 8:30AM  
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

1.0 miles, Moderate, \$.50 carpool fee  
6 miles from Roanoke

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

**Charles Parry**..... 540-951-1402  
**Dave Jones**..... 540-552-3058

**Sunday, December 19, 2010 8:00AM  
Fairystone State Park Trails**

7.0 miles, Moderate, \$6.00 carpool fee  
60 miles from Roanoke

This hike will be around 7 miles taking in the Lakeshore, Little Mountain Falls and Mountain View trails with other connecting trails. If time permits, the hike can encompass the other side of the lake's trail system of about 2.5 miles. The Mountain View Trail allows views of the Cahas Mountain range.

**Maurice Turner** .....334-2128

**Sunday, December 19, 2010 1:00PM  
Fort Lewis Mountain**

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

This out and back hike crosses Mason's Creek before ascending Fort Lewis Mountain. There are limited views from the summit.

**Dave Sutton** .....774-0648  
**Sue Scanlin** .....989-0497

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

7.6 miles, Moderate, \$.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](mailto:mikeva999@yahoo.com)

**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 \_\_\_\_\_ Individ. # 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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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**992-1350** ..... [mikeva999@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeva999@yahoo.com)  
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**540-552-3058** ..... [dhjones@together.net](mailto:dhjones@together.net)  
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**293-7967** ..... [codenine911@hotmail.com](mailto:codenine911@hotmail.com)  
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**989-7053** ..... [jandrclark@cox.net](mailto:jandrclark@cox.net)

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..... [dperry@westernvirginialandtrust.org](mailto:dperry@westernvirginialandtrust.org)  
Roanoke College Rep., Brian Chisom  
**389-7393 (H), 375-7393 (W)** ..... [chisom@roanoke.edu](mailto:chisom@roanoke.edu)  
Mid-week Workhikes, Bill Gordge  
**774-3016** ..... [bgordge@cox.net](mailto:bgordge@cox.net)

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**540-953-3571** ..... [lbelleville@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:lbelleville@appalachiantrail.org)  
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**540-953-3571** ..... [jparrish@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jparrish@appalachiantrail.org)  
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ATC-LT Coordinator - James River to New River and  
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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