

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

SPRING 2003

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.



The Cascades in Winter – Jerry Austin

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CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES**WORK HIKES****Sunday, April 6 - 8:30 AM & 1:00 PM
Catawba Mountain****Sat. & Sun, May 24 & 25 - 8:30 AM
Konnarock – Sarver's Cabin****Sat. & Sun, May 31 & June 1 - 8:00 AM
Whiterocks Campground****Sat. & Sun, June 14 & 15 - 8:30 AM
Konnarock – Sarver's Cabin****Hike Scheduling****Contact Don Nulph****774-8618 – Nulph-d@cox.net****BOARD MEETINGS****(All members are always welcome.****Please let the host know you plan to attend.)****Thursday, April 10, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Jim Hutchings****Thursday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Dick Clark****Thursday, June 19, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Charles Parry****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, April 6, 2003, 8:30 AM
Workhike – Catawba Mountain**

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

**Sunday, April 6, 2003, 1:00 PM
Workhike – Catawba Mountain**

\$1.50 carpool fee
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

**Sunday, April 6, 2003, 1:00 PM
Otter Creek**

4 miles, moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
Kenny Garrett 980-8946, Sue Scanlin 989-0497

**Sunday, April 13, 2003, 8:00 AM
Mau-Har Trail --- 3 Ridges Loop**

13.5 miles, very strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee
Kris Peckman 366-7780
Laura Montague 725-3682

**Sunday, April 13, 2003, 1:00 PM
Rt. 621 to Niday Shelter**

4 miles- Slow/Beginner hike, \$3.00 carpool fee
Dave Sutton 774-0648, Jean Warren 384-6229

**Saturday, April 19, 2003, 10:00 AM
Black Horse Gap to Salt Pond Rd via 1930 AT**

4.5 miles, moderate bushwhack, \$3.00 carpool fee
Dana Helsley 977-4154
Fred Coughlan 387-2331

**Sunday, April 27, 2003, 7:00 AM
Hog Camp Gap in Amherst Co. to Punch Bowl Mt. and crossing at Blue Ridge Parkway**

16 miles, strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee
Co-Leaders: Kenny Garrett 890-8946 and
Laura Montague 725-3682

**Sunday, April 27, 2003, 1:00 PM
McAfee's Knob**

7 miles, strenuous, \$1.50 carpool fee
Linda Akers 776-1969, Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140

**Sunday, May 4, 2003, 10:00 AM
Salt Pond Road to Fulhardt Knob**

6 miles, moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee
Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140, Linda Akers 776-1969

**Sunday, May 4, 2003, 1:00 PM
Fire Pink Hike- Rock Castle Creek**

5 miles, moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
Ed Wallace 774-0175, Sue Scanlin 989-0947

**Saturday, May 10, 2003, 10:00 AM
Stiles Falls**

4 miles, Slow/Beginner hiker, \$3.50 carpool fee
Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637
Jean Warren 384-6229

**Sunday, May 11, 2003, 8:30 AM
Crabtree Falls & The Priest**

9 miles, Strenuous, Bob & Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Sunday, May 18, 2003, 8:00 AM
North Mtn, Andy Layne to 311**

12 miles, Strenuous, \$3.50
Rusty and Laura Schundler 966-0105

**Sunday, May 18, 2003, 1:00 PM
Hay Rock**

7 miles, moderate to strenuous, no carpool fee
Dave Sutton 774-0648, Maurice Turner 334-2128

**Saturday & Sunday, May 24–25, 2003, 8:30 AM
Workhike – Sarver's Cabin – Konnarock Crew**

\$2.00 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Dave Cheslow 389-7791

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Skip Abercrombie
Jerry Austin
Ray Batiato
Carol Broderson
Julie Buchikos
Karen Coon
Betsy Davies
Marianne Demkó
Jennifer Divers
Tim Dorrell
Jeanne Duddy

JoAnn & Emily Edmunds
Joanne Gaeta
Dan & Donna Haley
Shelley Himel
Mark Ingram
Dr. Richard & Teresita
LaBarbera
Terrence May
Raymond F. McKee
Karen L. McLamb
Robert S. Niss

Amanda C. Pauley
Obie Reynolds
Steve Rittenhouse
Charlie Scharnberg
David L. Schoendorfer
Patrick B. Setter
Suzanne & Warren Show
Karen Shreffler
Bob Stimson
and Herb & Patsy Whitley

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

Mervin Brower

President's Message

Three years have elapsed and it's time for me to pass the torch. During my term of office I have come to appreciate even more the remarkable treasure that we all have in the Appalachian Trail.

As president, I've had the opportunity of meeting many people from Maine to Georgia who selflessly devote time and energy to making the trail even better. Among them, our own club has some of the best -- hands down.

In particular, I have had a very satisfactory working relationship with the RATC Board. This is a group that gets things done and I'm humbled by the confidence that you placed in me to take the helm for a little while.

Thanks to all, best wishes and ... happy trails.

Dick Clark

Hike Leaders Meeting Rescheduled

The Hike Leaders meeting, originally slated for February 6, has been rescheduled for Thursday, April 3 at 7:30 PM. As before, we will plan to meet in the Patterson Meeting Room of the Colket Student Center at Roanoke College (park in the large lot on High street across from Olin Hall and ask a student if you need directions to the center).

A number of you have responded to our request for ideas for improving our hiking protocol and we appreciate it. We will accept additional input at

any time up to the meeting date. You may contact Leonard Adkins at habitualhiker.va@netzero.net or by writing to RATC at P.O. Box 12282, Roanoke 24024.

Please try to attend this meeting if you lead or participate in Club hikes, or simply have an interest in our program. We want to address your concerns and make hiking with RATC a better experience for everyone.

Trail Supervisor's Report

It has been a rather quiet winter for trail maintenance activities with two winter work hikes canceled because of snow. However, there will be a lot more activity as the weather starts to improve. Hopefully, our trails did not sustain too much damage from the recent ice storms. In addition to our regularly scheduled work trips, we will have a couple of special activities this spring. On Saturday, April 5 we will have a drainage control workshop in the Rocky Gap area. The main emphasis will be on rock water bars. Those who wish to attend should give me a call. Also, the Konnarock Crews will

visit us twice during the spring. During both of these visits we will be working on a new access trail to the Sarver Shelter. The dates are May 22 – 26 and June 12 – 16. For those who wish to plan further ahead the crew will pay us a final visit from July 31 to August 4 when we will do rehabilitation work on the AT just north of the Boy Scout Shelter. Remember five days with the Konnarock Crews will get you a beautiful T-shirt. I hope to see you on some of these activities.

Charles Parry

Hikemaster Report

Awards for Hike Leaders from October, 2001, to September 30, 2002

Hats: at least 4 hikes completed:
HR Blankenship, Terri McClure, Mary Lou Gaminde, Jim Law, John Lynham, Laura Montague, Sue Scanlin, Laura Schundler, Rusty Schundler, Dave Sutton, and Maurice Turner

T-Shirts: 7-8 hikes completed:
Linda Akers, Mervin Brower, Blanche Brower,

Zetta Campbell, Kenny Garrett, Bobbie Sticher, and Ed Wallace

Hat and T-Shirt: 9 or more hikes completed:
Suzanne Barnett

113-mile Patch: Kenny Garrett and Laura Montague

Thanks to all of you who helped me make the hikes possible during the last 2 years. Sincerely,

Suzanne Barnett

If you plan to be away, let us know and we will put a first-class stamp on your Blazer. That is cheaper and easier than paying for the notice that your Blazer went into the trash! – *Bob Peckman*

RATC Online

I am absolutely thrilled to announce that Bill Poff, owner of the Roanoke based internet provider called ICONS, Inc. (<http://www.icn.net>) has volunteered to host our website... for FREE! This will save the club hundreds of dollars each year!

Our new site should be much more reliable, faster, and easier to use.

I am starting the process of converting from our old site to the new one this weekend. The entire conversion should take about a month (give or take). We'll keep the

same address so most people will simply notice that the site is more groovy than it used to be...

If you are interested in being a tester of the new web site, please email me.

David Cheslow

PS If you know anyone who needs a commercial website built or hosted, please recommend Bill's company. He's an excellent designer/developer and he's supporting us... we should support him too.

Workshops Offered By ATC & Others

Crosscut Saw Certification:

April 12-13, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-544-7388

Chainsaw Certification

April 26-27, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-544-7388

Wilderness First Aid & CPR

May 2-4, Sugar Grove, VA, #540-961-5551
\$ 110/ club member, 135/non-member

Grip Hoist/Winch Techniques

May 11, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-544-7388

Natural Diversity Monitoring

June 28-29, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-961-5551

Rock Work

May 10, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-961-5551

Log Staircase installation

April 9, Winding Stair Gap, NC, 828-254-3708

Drainage

April 5, Kelly's Knob, VA, 540-961-5551
May 7, Wayah Bald, NC, 828-254-3708

Wet Trail Area Techniques

May 15, GSMNP, Tenn., 828-254-3708

Leave No Trace Trainer Course

April 4-6, \$35, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-961-5551
or jbickel@appalachiantrail.org, www.lnt.org.

Leave No Trace Master Course

April 28-May 2, \$500, Cullowhee, NC, 307-335-2213
or tmartinez@appalachiantrail.org, www.lnt.org.

Basic Trail Maintenance

July 17, Bland, VA, 540-961-5551
July 12, Sugar Grove, VA, 540-961-5551

National Trails Day

June 7, GSMNP, Tenn., 865-577-2604
June 7, Amicalola Falls State Park, GA, 404-727-8091

Hike Reports

Sunday, September 8, 2002, 1 PM Bottom Creek Gorge

Members: Sue Scanlin (leader), Jean Warren (assistant), Paul ??? (sorry, couldn't decipher last name), Georgia Gallaher, Marianne Russell, Jennifer Divers, Sharon Harrison with Luke, Sherry Kessel, Neil and Debbie Fitzpatrick, and guests: Stephanie Scanlin, Jimmie Ribble
A dozen hikers plus Luke the Lab met at Cave Spring Corners, drove up Bent Mountain in 3 cars, and were at the entrance to Bottom Creek Gorge before long. It was perfect up there: warm yet shady and with a little breeze going. Some deer played hosts near the kiosk. We took the blue trail in. As expected, the falls were dry but turkey vultures put on a good show for us at the overlook. The yellow trail took us back to the cars. All seemed to have enjoyed themselves.

(Editor's note: This report was received 9/9/02)

Sunday, December 1, 2002, 8:00 AM 113-mile, hike # 6

Dragon's Tooth Parking Lot to Trout Creek

Cancelled, very cold temperatures, no calls

Sunday, December 1, 2002, 1:00 PM Fort Lewis Mountain

Ed Wallace (leader), Maurice Turner (assistant), Dana Helsley, Blanche and Mervin Brower

What a cold day for a hike. But, I guess it is that time of year. - The trail is in pretty good shape considering it isn't connected to the AT. - Didn't see any other hikers, although we did come across some mountain bikers on top.

Sunday, December 8, 2002, 8:00 AM Workhike—Bailey's Gap

Cancelled due to snow and ice.

**Sunday, December 8, 2002, 1:00 PM
Roanoke Mountain Loop**

Cancelled?

**Sunday, December 15, 2002, 8:00 AM
Black Horse Gap to Bear Wallow Gap**

Cancelled. We will try again another day.

**Sunday, December 15, 2002, 1:00 PM
Wolf Creek Greenway**

Maurice Turner (leader), Ed Wallace (assistant), Marianne Demkó, Georgia Gallaher, Dana Helsley, Bill Mistele, and Jimmy Ribble.

We met at Market Square East and drove to Hardy Road to begin our hike. It was an easy hike that took us through both Goode and Stonebridge Park and along Wolf Creek. It was a pleasant day for hiking with temperatures in low 50's and sunny in the early stages but partially overcast at end of our hike. We passed the Ferguson family when we entered Goode Park and again when we were returning. Many thanks to Lynn and Peggy Bryant who maintain this trail. We were back to our vehicles by 2:30.

**Wednesday, January 1, 2003, 9:00 AM
Douthat State Park**

Cancelled for downpouring rain. Next year!

**Sunday, January 5, 2003, 8:30 AM
Workhike - Andy Layne Trail**

Charles Parry (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Dana Helsley, Fred Coughlan, Ian Carton

It was supposed to snow in late afternoon, but it had already started when I got up. It didn't amount to much, but it did make the roads a bit slippery. The Roanoke folks were already at the parking lot when Ian and I got there. We spent a few minutes deciding what we would do and what tools to carry in. We decided the main work was digging near Scorched Earth Gap, but there was some clipping and a few blowdowns to be removed. Consequently everybody was assigned a digging tool, Kris took a pair of loppers and I a chainsaw. We spent most of the morning removing a few blow downs, clipping a bit, closing a switchback shortcut and doing a bit of digging. As we neared the top, we discussed options for lunch. As there

was about an inch of snow on the ground, we thought about going to Lambert's Meadow Shelter. However, as we arrived at the trail section that needed regrading, there was a large boulder and around the bottom edge of the boulder was dry dirt. It didn't take long to decide that would be our lunch site. Three hikers passed us while we were eating lunch. My gloves had gotten a bit wet during the morning and consequently, my hands got quite cold during the lunch break. I guess the others got a bit cold also, as everyone seemed anxious to get back to work. Fortunately, the trail that needed regrading was covered by a heavy layer of leaves and some old snow. When that was raked off, it was like digging trail in the summer time. This was in sharp contrast to a few areas that we tried to dig that were not so well insulated. If you have ever tried digging frozen ground, you will know what I mean. The sun actually peeked at us once and the snow had stopped falling. I guess we worked there for two or three hours before deciding we had finished the job. On the way out we looked for ways to get the trail off the very steep section. As the easy solution is forbidden by property boundaries, we need to look to the right on the way out. This was probably the 25th time I had thought about the problem, as I think about it every time I go through there. However, this time Dana came up with some ideas that might work. Some scouting will be necessary to see if it is worthy of further pursuit. A bit further down, we could look back up the mountain and see where we had worked. It appeared as a dark streak in the snow along the mountainside. We felt we had done a good day's work when we reached the parking lot.

**Sunday, January 5, 2003, 1:00 PM
RT. 620 to Pickle Branch Shelter**

Cancelled due to snow.

**Sunday, January 12, 2003, 8:30 AM
621 and Niday Shelter to Sarvers Cabin**

Dave Cheslow (leader), Kenny Garrett (assistant), Members: H.R. Blankenship, Guests: Chris Fluitt, Emilee Hall, Lucy & Sam (dogs)

Dave e-mailed me a draft of the hike report, which I somehow lost/deleted. So, here's a new report from memory of Dave's report. The morning started with a crystal clear sky, and very cold

temperatures. The stroll to Niday Shelter was nice and serene. The shelter was in good shape, and after a short break we continued up Sinking Creek Mountain. There were a few blow-downs between the shelter and the ridge, but no major obstacles. We stopped just below the ridge line to enjoy lunch in sun. As we were finishing up, Chris, Emilee, Lucy, and Sam caught up with us. We then started our beautiful ridge walk across the flat rocks and patches of snow. The wind was brisk and cold across the top of the mountain. The view went on forever with a perfectly clear sky. About halfway across the trek, we had a minor delay when one of the dogs ran off and was finally found backtracking the way we had come. We then made the steep descent to Sarvers Cabin. The saving grace was that we knew it was all downhill. Climbing from Sarvers Cabin to the AT is a real chore until the new relocation occurs later this year. Sarvers Cabin is a beautiful example of fine workmanship. After a break there, we cleaned up a bag full of trash and headed down the access trail to the parking area. This hike should definitely be on everyone's list for wonderful views, two shelters, and overall workout. Highly recommended.

**Sunday, January 12, 2003, 1:00 PM
Star Trail and Mill Mountain Loop**

Dave Sutton (leader), Suzanne Barnett (assistant), Bill Mistele, Bobbie Sticher, Maurice Turner, Zetta Campbell, Bill Clarkson, Teresa Bonamo, Dana Helsley, Mary Lou Gaminde

A gathering of enthusiastic hikers set off together on this clear, crisp, cold winter day to hike to the top of Mill Mtn. We regrouped in the gravel parking lot off Riverland Rd. about 1:20pm and we were on our way. As we approached the first road crossing, Zetta fell, injuring herself. Suzanne went back to get her car and took her to the E.R., (nothing broken, but in some pain and recovering). We continued up the trail and stopped at the Fishburn Memorial plaque. Here we snacked and had a photo op. Next, we went down another hill and continued along the old road that used to take people up the mountain. As we walked we passed a '53 Ford (Dana's guess) that had run off the road years ago. After hiking on a closed-off paved road we arrived at the visitor's center, then to the upper level observation deck for a magnificent view of

the city. We had finally reached the Star! The hike was an easy down hill from here.

**Sunday, January 19, 2003, 10:00 AM
McAfee's Knob**

Bobbie Sticher (leader), Linda Akers (assistant), H.R. Blankenship, Eve Brosowsky, Marianne Demkó, Bob and Kris Peckman, Jennifer Pfister, Beverly Williamson

This January Sunday was a beautiful, cold, windy and cloudless day for a hike in the snow. We made the first tracks in the snow going up the back side to McAfee Knob. We had a snack at McAfee Knob but it was very windy and cold there. We hiked back to the parking lot to end a very enjoyable hike. Eve was hiking to McAfee Knob for the first time.

**Sunday, January 19, 2003, 1:30 PM
Murray Run Greenway**

Lynn Bryant (leader), Dave Sutton (assistant), Skip Abercrombie

We left the Patrick Henry High School athletic field about 1:30 pm to do Murray Run Trail. It was a beautiful sunny day with temperatures in the low 30s and a light breeze. It was a busy day on the trail with runners, hikers, people with their families and folks walking their pets. Murray Run Trail is a work in progress with some sections complete, some in semi-completion, and some parts not yet built. Thanks go to the RATC's midweek work hike group for building most of these various connecting trails and the bridge behind the PBS (WBRA) TV station. Interesting points along the trail include the overlook behind the community college and the 80 feet of "coconut" logs in Murray Run stream that were installed for stream erosion prevention. We returned to our cars about 3:15 pm.

**Sunday, January 26, 2003, 8:00 AM
Circuit Hike-Bearwallow Gap to RT 614
Return by Little Cove Mtn. Trails**

Laura Montague (leader), Lois Smith (assistant), Kris Peckman, Bob Peckman, Gary Hale, H.R. Blankenship, Larry Austin

After seeing this hike posted in the Blazer, my mother mentioned that starting at Bearwallow Gap would leave the worst uphill for the end of the hike -- so we changed the direction and started up the Little Cove Mountain Trail first while we were all fresh. Everyone agreed that this was a smart thing to do.

Due to recent rains I was worried that the three creek crossings would be difficult to ford - but no problem - they were all frozen solid. The ice here and on Jennings Creek was beautiful. There was no problem with the ice holding us and the leader tested it by falling first thing.

It was a crisp cold day. Bob met us later on as he stayed home to recover from a migraine. It was great to have him join us. Kris lost her mittens that were originally made by her grandmother, but she and Bob drove up the road that intersects the trail on the mountain and found the mittens!!

There was just enough snow on the mountain at the top to add to the beauty of the day and a great hike was had by all.

**Sunday, January 26, 2003, 11:00 AM
Douthat State Park, Blue Suck Falls**

John Lynham (leader), Maurice Turner (assistant), Clyde Perdue, Skip Abercrombie

Three members plus guest Skip (who is planning to join RATC) enjoyed great weather (cold, mostly clear) and hiking at one of Virginia's best state parks. Seven trails were used to produce a 5 to 6-mile loop hike in some really pretty forest. The only other person we saw in the park was a mountain biker who said he was going to attempt to get to the top of Middle Mountain. As that would be nearly a 1700-foot elevation gain over some rough trail, we all agreed he must be very fit. A sign says Blue Suck Falls (and Trail) got its name from the Park's sulphur springs, as wildlife like to inhale the fumes. Since I've never smelled sulphur in the park, I "douthat" is correct.

**Sunday, February 2, 2003, 10:00 AM
Cascades**

Dave Sutton (leader) Jerry Austin (assistant).

A warm day for a hike, after several days of below freezing temperatures. Perhaps the earlier start time at 10AM instead of the usual 1PM may have had some hikers sleeping later. Anyhow, Jerry and I met at the trailhead about 11:15AM (after paying the two dollar parking fee of which all goes to maintain this wonderful 4 mile loop trail). Remnants of the sawmill that existed prior to 1920 can be seen just after leaving the parking area. Hard packed snow and ice covered 90% of the lower trail to the falls. Unusual ice formations had been created by the rush of water over rocks within the trout-stocked creek. A few large rock outcroppings lay near the trail for refuge should a hiker encounter foul weather. Two sturdy bridges that were built a few years ago are a great asset to this trail. The stairs leading to the falls had been packed with snow, so we had to step sideways to make it up. Here at the base, we were greeted by three dogs and half a dozen day hikers enjoying the awesome view of ice and snow. Water was cascading over and under previously frozen falls. Icicles near 30ft. long draped the walls surrounding the waterfall. We climbed 30 more stairs and made our way back to the parking area via the upper trail (logging road) which was now thawing, for a somewhat soggy return. Trees along the trail include maple, oak, shagbark hickory, beech, and a few hemlock. It will be a different story around June 1, when the rhododendron (which have buds on them now) along the river are blooming.

**Sunday, February 2, 2003, 1:00 PM
Smartview Loop**

Ed Wallace (leader), Sue Scanlin (assistant), Stephanie Scanlin, Mark Ingram, Ralph Hart, Suzanne and Warren Shows, Jim, Brett, and Misti Martindale, Davy and Martha Crockett, Paul Sims

Nice sunshiny day for a hike, lots of snow on the ground though. We were worried that the Blue Ridge Parkway might be closed. But, they don't close this section since the BRP is the only way the people on the farms in that area can get home.

We saw about twelve turkeys when we got on the BRP and a deer on the Smart Loop Trail.

Several of the hikers were in tennis shoes, but snow didn't slow them down.

**Sunday, February 9, 2003, 8:30 AM
Workhike - Catawba Mountain**

Snowed out.

**Sunday, February 16, 2003, 9:00 AM
Grassy Hill Reserve, Natural Area**

Cancelled?

**Sunday, February 16, 2003, 1:00 PM
Sharp Top**

Stormed out.

**Sunday, February 23, 2003, 8:00 AM
I-77 to Lickskillet Hollow (Changed)**

Kenny Garrett (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Laura Montague, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Jerry Austin



The original hike was scheduled for I-77 to Lickskillet Hollow, but due to the heavy rains and local flooding, it was voted on that the stream crossings were more than a little unsafe. We then decided to walk from Lickskillet to Kimberling Creek and back. This stroll was an easy 10.6 miles. The snow flurries were flying and a light dusting covered the trail. The weather channel had forecast winds above 50 mph, but I don't believe

they ever blew any harder than 45 mph. We encountered approx. a dozen recent blowdowns, but only one of them required a detour off the trail to get around it. The views were awesome, and we even braved the high winds to check out the blue blaze to the rock overlook and get a few pictures in. We encountered a few places where the heavy rainfall had damaged the trail. We ate lunch at Kimberling Creek bridge. None of us could ever remember seeing this creek as high as it was. All of the bridges in this section remained intact, in spite of the rain and snow of late. There were no regrets as we all agreed that this walk was remarkable and beautiful. And for those of you who let Mother Nature dictate your activities, we only let her detour ours and have wonderful memories to show for it.



**Sunday, February 23, 2003, 1:00 PM
Devil's Marble Yard**

Rusty and Laura Schundler 966-0105 – Report?

**Sunday, March 2, 2003, 8:30 AM
Douthat State Park - Beards Smart Mtn.
Trails**

John Lynham (Ice man), Maurice Turner (leader), Kris Peckman, Gary Hale, Jennifer Pfister, and Laura Montague.

Our hike took us on the Brushy Hollow and Mountain Top Trail before we headed back out on the Ross Camp Hollow Trail to the main road. We encountered difficult hiking at higher elevations where the trail was completely covered with a slanted hard crust of snow making it risky attempting to get a foot hold. We decided rather

than risk further hiking under these conditions to get out near the next road crossing. Ross Camp Hollow Trail seemed the logical choice.

We saw many tracks in the snow, possibly from weasel, bobcat, rabbit, raccoon, fox, grouse, squirrel and deer. There were larger tracks, some from dog but others may be from a lion.

Overall, the hike went well and the weather was cooperative making the views more enjoyable.

We started around 9:40 and got back to our vehicle at 2:40. Thanks to Kris and Laura for trail info. as John was unable to hike due to storm damage he encountered to his house from the last ice storm.

**Sunday, March 2, 2003, 1:00 PM
Dragon's Tooth**

Mervin Brower (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant), members: Ann Rogers and Jerry Austin and visitors: Konstantin Lougansla and Don & David Lawhorn (went part way)

We met at the Hanging Rock Orange Market. The weather was around 40° F and mainly cloudy. It was cold when we got to the top and very windy; going up and down we were sheltered from the wind. The creeks were all full and some water was running down parts of the trail. It was good to see water running again. The down side was the muddy patches on the trail. Things went fine and we kept the hikers together, which meant the lead hiker stopped and waited.

**Sunday, March 9, 2003, 8:00 AM
Punch Bowl Mtn. to James River
Blackhorse Gap to Rt 220**

Laura Montague (leader), Lois Smith (assistant), Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Gary Hale, H.R. Blankenship, Donnie Hoke

The hike that was originally planned was Punchbowl Crossing to the James River but this had to be changed because that portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway was closed due to ice and snow.

The group talked about options the night before at the annual banquet and made a final decision the next morning. Patches of snow were present on the roadside and several places along the trail. However, it was warm enough that at times we

were hiking in our shirt sleeves!!!!!! We had greater winter views throughout the hike and it was wonderful to see the creeks full of water. Because of all the repeated snows this winter none of us have gotten to hike as much as usual and this 14 miles reminded us of that fact. A great day was had by everyone.

Sunday, March 9, 2003, 1:00 PM

113 mile hike # 5

Sawtooth Ridge to Dragon's Tooth Parking Lot

Members: Kenny Garrett and Maurice Turner (co-leaders), Debbie Robbins, David Schoendorfer, Larry Austin, Blake Mitnick, Gene Downs, Linda Akers, Sue Scanlin, Stephanie Scanlin, Bobbie Sticher, Jesse Garrett, Lance Garrett, and guest: Brice Moon

We met at Hanging Rock at 1:00, and I was happy to see 14 happy souls ready to enjoy the beautiful early spring afternoon. The car switch was easy, and we began walking from 311/Catawba lot south to the Dragon's Tooth lot. The air was warm and a nice breeze blew most of the afternoon. The sun was bright and warm and everyone was recovering from the cabin fever of the past several storms. There were blue birds and a pileated woodpecker also sharing this great section of the A.T. Everyone set their own pace and we regrouped at two prearranged locations along the route. A great "Thank You" to the trail maintainers of this section. The trail was in great shape considering the recent weather. The only negative aspect of this stroll was that we arrived at our destination too soon.

Look at the number on your label. If it is 2002, then this is your last Blazer. Please pay your dues; we need you in RATC! – Bob Peckman

If you know Steve Nation: We have a bad address and no phone number. Please help us.

Hike Schedule (Cont.)

Sat., May 31 & Sunday, June 1, 2003, 8:00 AM Workhike – Whiterocks Camp Out

\$4.00 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Hal Cantrill 387-2347

Sunday, June 1, 2003, 8:00 AM Workhike – Whiterocks

\$4.00 carpool fee
Mike Ferguson 344-8525

Sunday, June 1, 2003, 1:00 PM Thunder Ridge to Cornelius Creek Shelter Rhododendron Hike

7 miles, moderately strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee,
Mervin and Blanche Brower, 387-9732

Sunday, June 8, 2003, 8:00 AM 113 mile #10 John's Creek to Pine Swamp Branch Shelter

13 miles, Strenuous, \$4:00 carpool fee
Co-Leaders: Kenny Garrett 890-8946 and
Jerry Austin 540-921-1792

Sunday, June 8, 2003, 1:00 PM Hanging Rock Greenway

3.5 miles, Slow/Beginner hike, no car fee
Mary Lou Gaminde 344-1637
Jean Warren 384-6229

Saturday and Sunday, June 14 –15, 2003, 8:30 AM Workhike – Sarver's Cabin with Konnarock Crew

\$2.00 carpool fee
Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, June 22, 2003, 9:00 AM 113 mile #9 - Sinking Creek to John's Creek

8 miles, moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
Jerry Austin 540-921-1792
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, June 22, 2003, 1:00 PM Harkening Hill

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

Sunday, June 29, 2003, 6:00 AM Peters Mountain

20 miles, very strenuous, \$4.50 carpool fee
Co-Leaders: Laura Montague 725-3682 and Kenny
Garrett 890-8946

Sunday, June 29, 2003, 1:00 PM Carvin's Cove

5-8 miles as determined by leaders and group,
moderate, carpool fee also depends
Linda Akers 776-1969, Bobbie Stitcher 890-2140

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