

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Autumn 2005

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.



Old Rag Mountain



Tinker Cliffs

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TRAIL BLAZER

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Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Curt & Nicole Kaucher
J. Michael & Louise Maloney
Mark Hargis
Jonathan P. Lancaster
Ellie Stello
Tina, Hannah & Jasmine McClung
Rylie Bane
Greg Jamison
Diane McVaney

Carol Reilly
Greg Sexton
Timothy C. Shank
Vaughn, Anne & David Wilburn
Paul W. Jones III
Rachel D. Lotts
Gareth Settle
Bob, Kim, Zach & Cameron Trout

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

Mervin Brower

President's Message

HELP! We need a social chairman. Carolyn McPeak is retiring. She is handling the Holiday Potluck on Saturday, December 10th. She has reserved the room and the caterer for the Banquet on March 11. She is willing to be one of the assistants for the Banquet. And the team that has been helping her is still active. So, if you are willing to try this much-needed job, you will not be thrown in the water to sink or swim! There is an active and knowledgeable team ready to help you.

Hettie Barnes has a good idea. We are going to print extra Blazers for her to distribute in offices. We will also put them in City Magazine-type places. We will also print enough for you. Call me and tell me how many you can use for any public office or store. Hettie says that the web site is nice, and so is the brochure, but the Blazer grabs her with the personal touch that reflects the true RATC experience. Of course, please also take some of those brochures that are in color and have the info well condensed for a quick read. In addition, we

will be working this quarter to get the club and our very fine web site to be better coordinated.

There is a flip side to everything. With so many folks wanting to be Trail Angels, we are getting Trash Angels. Food left out, even in coolers, can spoil and be a problem and also attract pests, some of which are human. We have even seen dangerous fuel set out! If you really want to be an angel, call me and let me put you on the list of possible shuttle drivers.

We regret that the Multi-Club Meet at Sherando Lake did not happen due to low sign up. Maybe the sign-up date was too early. Maybe we all didn't advertise enough. Maybe we didn't work hard enough to overcome the splitting of the Southern Region. Maybe everyone is busier and we should only do it on the non-conference years. Kris and I have had many warm contacts through this event. If it fails again next year, that might be the end of Multi-Club. Let's make sure that Multi-Club 2006 is a success!

Bob Peckman

Trail Supervisor's Report

We had 12 people earn T-shirts by working 5 or more days with the Konnarock Crews this summer and 28 people work with the crews. The T-shirt winners are Suzanne Barnett, Malcolm Black, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Fred Coughlan, Bill Floyd, Bill Gordge, Dana Helsley, Dave Hicks, Jerry Kyle, Charles Parry and Greg Still. I want to thank everyone who came out to work. Since we did not finish the Pearis Mountain relocation, we plan to divert our first week of Konnarock next year to

that project. That should finish the job. The last two weeks will be spent near one of the angels' favorite spots, either the Rest or the Gap. At this point the process of acquiring corridor land for a proposed relocation in the Angel's Gap area is progressing slowly. Consequently, it may be necessary to push that project back a year. This fall and winter, we will work on various rehab projects on Catawba and Brush Mountains.

Charles Parry

Tim Gubala dies

Tim Gubala died of cancer on the July 4th weekend. He was 57. Tim was active in the club during the late 70's and early 80's. He served as trail supervisor from 1977-1979 and vice-president from 1979-1980. He was a planner, first with the 5th

district and then with Roanoke County. Three or four years ago he took a job at Chesapeake. He was a Marine who had served in Viet Nam and was in the Reserves while in the club. He grew up in the Buffalo, NY area.

Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve Hiking Trail System Officially Opens on October 12, 2005

On the afternoon of October 12, 2005, the Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve Hiking Trail System will be officially opened with a dedication ceremony and guided hikes by Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation staff. This hiking trail system allows for loop hikes of up to 6.6 miles. The trailhead is located in the town of Rocky Mount,

just off of Business Hwy 220. For more information on the dedication ceremony and or the hiking trail system at Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve, please contact club member Mike Leahy, Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation Natural Area Steward, (540) 265-5234 or email mike.leahy@dcv.virginia.gov

Hike Reports

Sunday, May 22, 2005 1:00PM Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob

Peggy Bryant stepped in as substitute hike leader.

June 9-13, 2005 Pearis Mountain relocations with Konnarock

Charles Parry, Homer Witcher, Kris Peckman, Suzanne Barnett, Mac McDaniel, Dana Helsley, Fred Coughlan, Maurice Turner, Jim Overholser, Bill Gorge, Malcolm Black, Dave Hicks, Greg Still, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Mike Vaughn, Jerry Kyle, Dick Clark and Konnarock Crew: Ted Wilson, Christine Hoyer, Brady Gaisser, Becky Brown, Brian Wolford, Paul Barnett, Carel Theron & Verdery Kerr

Access to the work area was a problem for everybody but Dave and Greg who camped near the work site. On Friday everyone went in from the Narrows end. On Saturday, the club members went in from Narrows, while the Konnarock Crew went in from Doc's Knob. On Sunday, we all went in from Doc's Knob. The Narrows route is a bit shorter, but more climbing. Neither route is very quick. My first day was Saturday, and since I went off to clear out a blow-down after getting up there, I did not get to work until about 1:30. The first part of the relocation was quite rocky and a bit steep. Consequently, we put in a lot of rock-steps, both check-steps and the regular variety. In fact, that was about all I did during the two days I was there was to move rocks. The route was less rocky further down the trail and the diggers made good progress. We walked in and out on the new route on Sunday and felt that we should come close to completing the relocation during our next week of work.

Sunday, June 19, 2005 1:00PM Ribble Trail(South End) to Kimberling Creek (Rt. 606)

Kenny Garrett (co-leader), Linda King (co-leader), Jesse Garrett, Maya Bohler, Laura Montague, Carl Cornett and Ishmael Jenks

It was a beautiful afternoon to enjoy a Father's Day walk on the south side of Giles County. We

parked a vehicle by Kimberling Creek, and then loaded everyone into Kenny's truck for the ride to the south end of the Ribble Trail. We began our walk on the Ribble Trail, then turned south on the AT. We more or less followed Dismal Creek for a very relaxing and easy stroll.

We saw a few turkeys, a deer, and craw-dads. Carl was enjoying taking photos. We stopped for a long break at Dismal Falls. Kenny and Carl waded, Ismael went for a quick swim, and Maya played with the craw-dads. After much relaxing and great conversation, we decided to walk the remaining short distance to Kimberling Creek. We began hearing the rumbles of close thunder, but were able to finish the hike without any rain. We talked with one north bound thru-hiker, "Backtrack", who was enjoying the great afternoon weather.

I believe all had fun today.

Sunday, June 26, 2005 8:00AM Petites Gap to James River (Rt.501)

Diana Christopoulos (leader), Maurice Turner (co-leader), Fred Meyer, H.R. Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Kristin Peckman, Bob Peckman, Ellen Szego, Gabriel Szego, Maya Bohler, Richard Needham, Virginia Needham, Rachel Needham, Larry Austin, Laura Montague.

Fifteen people braved the early summer weather, including Fred from Charleston, West Virginia and Rachel and her parents from Charlottesville. A slightly overcast sky and lots of shade kept us fairly cool, with a high of 85 degrees. We abandoned our original lunch plans when we encountered a timber rattlesnake coiled up on the side trail. Carl took several photos of the rattling reptile in its dark phase. Other wildlife sightings included a large frog, a non-poisonous snake, and a pileated woodpecker. Our second-choice lunch spot, at the intersection with the Belfast Trail, featured many chestnut trees. Larry found one large tree (30+ feet) and the remains of a nut, so this tree must be reproducing itself. We took another break at Matts Creek Shelter with its nice setting on a burbling stream. After we reached the James River, we spotted bleeding heart wildflowers in the rock cliffs. We

appreciated the great trail work on the relocation of this section several years ago. Kudos to the Natural Bridge group for keeping it in great shape! The trip leader did have a little trouble making the final turn just before the footbridge – the informal path to floodplain campsites lured her off the trail. Despite a somewhat late start, everyone finished before 2:30. We celebrated with icy cold soft drinks, and then headed for home.

Sunday, June 26, 2005 1:00PM
Sunset Field to Apple Orchard Falls

Mervin Brower (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant leader).

We met at East Market Mall in nice 80 degree weather. No one else showed up so Blanche and I went on the scheduled hike. We then drove to Sunset Fields. The weather was cloudy and nice for hiking. We went about a mile past Apple Orchard Falls to make it a little longer hike. We saw one deer and one wild turkey on our hike.

Sunday, July 10, 2005 8:00AM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to Daleville
(Rt. 220) 113-Mile Hike # 3

Kenny Garrett (leader), Diana Christopulos (assistant leader), Roger Holnback, Carl Cornett, Jim Lewis, Charlie Scharnberg, Shelley Himel, Laura Montague, Caryl Connolly, Maya Bohler & Lois Smith

This was a beautiful day for a 13 mile stroll (not 11 miles, as advertised). We met at Daleville with Roger Holnback and Diana Christopulos, who assisted with the drive to the trail head. The initial climb to Scorched Earth Gap was enough to get everyone's heart pumping. After a short breather, we continued on to Lambert's Meadow Shelter. I broke the news that our casual hike was also a ruse for a quick work hike. We collectively moved the mouldering privy as required on an annual basis. After a few laughs, we continued along the ridge to numerous beautiful overlooks. The temperatures climbed as quickly as we did, and the air stayed still without much of a breeze. We took a break at Hay Rock, to enjoy another great view of Carvin's Cove. We then continued along Tinker Mountain and down to Daleville. This was another great hike with a great group of hikers.

Sunday, July 10, 2005 1:00PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob

Ed Wallace (leader), Maurice Turner, Charles Musgrove & Emory Richardson

This should have been labeled The Old F****, uh, Old Geezers Hike. All of us had gray hair except me. Mine would be gray if I had any.

After we got to the top and commented on how nice the new trail re-location was, we held an impromptu AARP meeting, gathered up our canes and hearing aids and shuffled back down the hill.

A hot, but nice hike.

July 13 - 17, 2005 8:00AM
Pearis Mountain Relocation with
Konnarock

Charles Parry, Kris Peckman, Mike Vaughn, Suzanne Barnett, Dana Helsley, Bill Gordge, Malcolm Black, Dave Hicks, Greg Still, Jerry Kyle, Bill Floyd, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Kim Buskirk, Bert Spetzler, Maya Bohler; Dave Schilling and Konnarock Crew: Ted Wilson, Ellen Gass, Caryl Theron, Lucy Kopiral, Adrienne Williams, Dennitte Davis, Rick Ostheimir, Eric Young

On Thursday morning it was raining and I decided not to go out. However, the rain stopped before 10, so I changed my mind. I went up the short route through the Gusler farm. The part of the route under the power line was quite steep, but it was relatively short. Overall, it was the quickest way into the site and most of the club members came in that way four of the days. When I got there on Thursday, I discovered that I was alone. I ate lunch and started to work. After a bit I heard the crew coming. They said that Dave H. was on his way in. On Friday, Dave and I were again the only club members. On Saturday, we had 12 club members for our best showing of the week. We also had a heavy afternoon thundershower that cut our workday short. On Sunday, we had 7 club members and on Monday 2, namely Dave H. and Bill F. We did not finish the relocation and there is close to another week's work to do. It will have to wait until next year.

Sunday, July 17, 2005 1:00PM

War Spur ; Loop , Connector , Overlook Hike

Mary Lou Gaminde (leader), Diana Christopulos (co-leader), Judy Larson, Charles Musgrove, Rachel Lotts, Pat Cousins, Carolyn Baratta, Lynn & Bill Jacoby and Hooper.

It was a hot and humid day here in Roanoke but a little cooler when we got to the hike site. We hiked through some beautiful cinnamon ferns first then out to the War Spur overlook and had lunch and enjoyed the nice views up there. We then continued our hike through the virgin forest part of the hike. When we got back to our vehicles Diana had some really cold drinks for us that really hit the spot. We got there too late for the buffet at Mountain Lake but some of us took a detour on our way home and ate at Cracker Barrel.

Sunday, July 24, 2005 8:00AM

Hoop Hole, Upper Loop

Mike Vaughn (leader), Charlie Scharnberg (assistant leader), Jonathan Lancaster

It had been hot, muggy, and rainy for the three weeks prior to the hike but much of the humidity cleared out the day before the hike, so it was relatively comfortable most of the day. The first mile of the trail is along a mountain stream (Stony Run), with 4 or 5 stream crossings. The water was low so these were relatively easy. We saw several trout in the stream pools. The trail continues up Price Mountain and then follows the ridge for about two miles. There are limited views through the trees on both sides of the ridge.

Along the ridge, we passed a group of young hikers who were on two-week hiking trip with Wilderness Adventures. They were the only other hikers we saw all day. The trail is not well-maintained and can be difficult to follow. There were many blow-downs across the trail. It is well-blazed however.

Descending from the ridge, the trail was overgrown with stinging nettles and we had to use our hiking sticks to hack our way through. When we reached the junction with the lower Hoop Hole loop trail, we decided to take the long way around, which added about a mile and half to the hike. This was well worth it, because the trail meanders along Hipes Branch, another scenic mountain

stream. Dense stands of rhododendron line the stream. Charlie, who is an avid trout fisherman, saw several trout in this stream as well.

Due to the recent wet weather we saw a wide variety of mushrooms. We also saw a lot of toads (I'm not sure if they multiply during the wet season). Jonathan also saw a fair-sized black snake on the trail. We hiked briskly and completed the hike at 1:30.

Sunday, July 24, 2005 1:00PM

Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve

Mike Leahy (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant leader), Dick Clark, Charles Musgrove, Maya Bohler, Ruth Harris and H.R. Blankenship

Although the temperatures were in the 90s and the dew point was high we enjoyed the hike, the group stayed together, and nobody got heat stroke. We took our time on this trail to observe different species of trees, shrubs and wildflowers, including two globally rare wildflower species: smooth coneflower and Menge's fameflower. Other highlights of the trail included seeing three box turtles, a number of turkey feathers and turkey dusting areas, fence lizards, rock outcrops, and a sphinx moth. We started the hike around 1:40 pm and finished at around 5:40 pm. This is a new trail system and everyone seemed to enjoy the work done by both volunteers (Bill Gordge's mid-week group) and trail contractors. The trail had gentle grades for the most part and pleasant walking.

Sunday, August 21, 2005 1:00PM

**Black Horse Gap (BRP) to Curry Gap (BRP)
113-Mile Hike # 1**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leader), Carl Cornett (assistant leader), Jeanne Duddy, Rachel Lotts, John Miller, Peter Lissmann, Bruce Koim, Bobbie Stitcher & Chet Chandler

The weather was nice and Sunny and not too hot during the hike. It was nice to see Pete Lissmann hike with us, he was up visiting from Florida.

We stopped at the shelter for a snack and rest. Everyone stayed close together until we made our final push to Cove Road. The car drivers came out first and went and got the cars at Black Horse Gap. So when every one came out we did not have a long wait.

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.

Sunday, October 2, 2005 8:00AM

Forge Mountain

6.0 miles, Strenuous, \$5.50 carpool fee
56 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Rockbridge County. The trailhead is in the Goshen Pass area near Lexington. There is a high scenic ridge with cliffs and very unusual rock formations. An old trail description, borrowing words from Dante's *Inferno*, warns "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here". This is something of an exaggeration. However parts of the trail are very steep and there are stream crossings if a loop hike is attempted.

Charles Musgrove

540-345-7969

Charlie Scharnberg

540-342-3104

Sunday, October 2, 2005 1:00PM

Read Mountain Hike-a-Thon

3.0 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee
0 miles from Roanoke

Fund-raising event for Read Mountain. See pp. 13-14.

Read Mountain Alliance

977-4540

Sunday, October 9, 2005 8:00AM

Pine Swamp (Rt.635) to Johns Creek (Rt. 632) 113-Mile Hike # 10

13.2 miles, Strenuous, \$8.00 carpool fee
62 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Giles County. From Stony Creek Valley we will climb 1,100 feet in one mile to the heavily wooded northern slope of Big Mountain. The trail winds through the 11,172-acre Mountain Lake Wilderness between Salt Sulphur Turnpike and the War Spur Shelter. Wind Rock on Potts Mountain provides the best viewpoint of the hike.

Diana Christopulos

387-0930

Homer Witcher

992-3932

Sunday, October 9, 2005 1:00PM
Daleville (Rt. 220) to Hay Rock

8.0 miles, Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County north of Roanoke. Except for a short feeder trail (old A.T.), the route follows the Appalachian Trail to Hay Rock and back again. There are several good overlooks along the way, but the best one is at Hay Rock. This overhanging chunk of sandstone provides shelter on one side and great views on the other – for those willing to scramble to the top.

Mervin & Blanche Brower 387-9732
Suzanne Barnett 772-4273

Sunday, October 16, 2005 7:00AM
Old Rag

6.7 miles, Strenuous, \$14.00 carpool fee
 149 miles from Roanoke

Old Rag is in the Shenandoah National Park north of Charlottesville and Madison. It is a very popular hike that has spectacular views from a massive granite peak.

Kenny Garrett 537-5347
Linda R. King 342-2411

Sunday, October 16, 2005 1:00PM
Apple Orchard Falls / Cornelius Creek Loop

5.7 miles, Moderate, \$2.50 carpool fee
 26 miles from Roanoke

This is a popular hike located in the North Creek camping area, near Arcadia. A blue-blazed trail, steep in places, leads uphill to Apple Orchard Falls. The falls are impressive and the trail has been greatly improved in recent years. Beyond the falls, a crossover path leads to the Cornelius Creek Trail which follows the creek downhill - back to the parking area.

Linda Akers 776-1969
Bobbie Sticher 397-2760

Sunday, October 23, 2005 8:00AM
Montebello Fish Hatchery to
Long Mountain (Rt. 60)

16.3 miles, Strenuous, \$7.50 carpool fee
 52 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Nelson and Amherst County, where the AT averages 3,640 feet in elevation between Fish Hatchery Road and Salt Log Gap and then traverses Tar Jacket Ridge, Cold Mountain and Bald Knob with sweeping views from both Tar Jacket Ridge and Cold Mountain enroute to Long Mountain Wayside. There will be about a 45 minute car shuttle between the two points.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Laura Montague 725-3682

Sunday, October 23, 2005 1:00PM
Bearwallow Gap to Jennings Creek

6.4 miles, Moderate, \$3.00 carpool fee
 23 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County south-east of Buchanan.

David Sutton 774-0648
Ed Wallace 540-774-0175

Sunday, October 30, 2005 8:30AM
Sawtooth Work Hike

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

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, October 30, 2005 1:00PM
Curry Gap (BRP) to Fullhardt Knob Shelter

7.8 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
 9 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt County.

Homer & Therese Witcher 992-3932
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, November 6, 2005 8:00AM
Sprouts Run and Wilson Mountain Trails

9.0 miles, Moderate, \$2.00 carpool fee
 24 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Botetourt County, at Solitude near Arcadia. The trails have not been maintained for years but recently the hike leader has attempted to open them up. There may be some work still to be done on Wilson Mountain Trail at the time of this hike but that makes it more interesting. Sprouts Run Trail offers creekside walking with little elevation gain until the last 3/4 mile in its approach to Hoop Pole Gap. This is a beautiful trail ignored by most but it offers several nice cascading waterfalls, pools of water (hopefully there will be water) and some cliffs and huge trees of various species. Wilson Mountain is mainly ridge walking with its descent back down to the beginning of Sprouts Run Trail and lends views of the James River, Solitude valley and mountains in the distance.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, November 6, 2005 1:00PM
Petites Gap to Thunder Ridge Overlook

3.3 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$3.50 carpool fee
 35 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Rockbridge County.

Kenny Garrett 537-5347
Bobbie Sticher 397-2760

Sunday, November 13, 2005 8:30AM
Brush Mountain Work Hike

Some miles, Moderate, \$1.50 carpool fee
 18 miles from Roanoke

Reblaze and make treadway repairs.

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, November 13, 2005 1:00PM
Fenwick Mines Trails

3.1 miles, Easy, \$2.50 carpool fee
 26 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Craig County, approximately 7 miles northeast of New Castle on VA 685. Fenwick Mines has open pit mines & foundations of old mining structures, nature trail, & wetlands created by beaver. Great for beginners or those a little out of shape.

David Sutton 774-0648
Liz Wicks 540-776-1777

Sunday, November 20, 2005 8:00AM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to
North Mountain Trail (Rt. 311)

10.4 miles, Moderate-Strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee
 9 miles from Roanoke

The hike starts in Botetourt County and follows the border of Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke counties; it climbs North Mountain on the gently graded Catawba Valley Trail, which begins just opposite the Andy Layne Trail on Route 779. The rest of the hike is an up-and-down ridge walk, with views on both sides visible through the trees in winter.

Kris Peckman 366-7780
Charles Musgrove 540-345-7969

Sunday, November 20, 2005 1:00PM
Deer Trail (FSR 224) to
North Mountain Trail (Rt. 311)

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

The hike starts in Craig County and ends in Roanoke County following the border a good part of the way.

Mike Ferguson 344-8525
Jean Warren 540-384-6229

Sunday, November 27, 2005 8:00AM
Jenny Knob (Rt.611) to Licksillet Hollow
(Rt. 608), 113-Mile Hike # 14

3.9 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$7.00 carpool fee
 70 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Bland County.

Dick Clark 989-7053
Charlie Scharnberg 342-3104

Sunday, November 27, 2005 1:00PM
Daleville (Rt. 220) to Mountain Pass Road
(Rt. 652)

4.6 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee

The hike is located in Botetourt County.

Homer & Therese Witcher 992-3932
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, December 4, 2005 8:00AM
Douthat State Park (Hike 3)

10.0 miles, Moderate, \$4.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

This hike is located in Bath County. It combines six trails to form a loop of about 10 miles. The hike provides lake side walking before entering the woods and the climb to the top of the mountain. It provides views from Tuscarora Overlook and Lookout Rock. It also passes by Blue Suck Falls and follows the creek back to the starting point.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Maurice Turner 334-2128

Sunday, December 4, 2005 1:00PM
Brushy Mountain at Carvins Cove Parking Lot

6.0 miles, Moderate, \$0.00 carpool fee
 0 miles from Roanoke

Come join us on a new hike that begins at Carvins Cove Parking Lot (off Rt. 311, not Williamson Rd.) The one mile ascent to the top of Brushy Mountain is quite steep, while the rest is moderate. Good views of McAfee's Knob and the valley are beautiful, while on the descent we will cross a stream several times. It's a pretty loop trail.

Jean Warren 540-384-6229
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, December 11, 2005 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike

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

Repair steps and install a few new ones. Install a few waterbars.

Charles Parry 540-951-1402
Laurie Adkins 966-2811

Sunday, December 11, 2005 1:00PM
Lee Hollow (Rt. 621) to Niday Shelter

2.6 miles, Easy, \$1.50 carpool fee
 18 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Craig County.

Georgia Gallaher 345-8700
Jean Warren 540-384-6229

Sunday, December 18, 2005 10:00AM
Jennings Creek (Rt. 614) to Bryant Ridge
Shelter

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

Located in Botetourt County not far from Arcadia and Buchanan.

Kenny Garrett 537-5347
Dick Clark 989-7053

Sunday, December 18, 2005 1:00PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to
Sawtooth (Rt 785)

4.3 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

Located in Roanoke County just west of Salem and I-81 near the Catawba Valley. This is up and down ridge walk through the forest coming out on pasture near the end. In 2002 the fall leaves were very beautiful.

Bobbie Stitcher 397-2760
David Sutton 774-0648

Hike Reports (Continued)

Sunday, July 31, 2005 8:00AM Potts Mountain (LA)

Charles Musgrove (leader), Greg Tinaglia (assistant leader), Greg's dog Colby, Mark Packett, Paul Jones, Cyrus Bakhit & Carl Cornett.

Raindrops on the roof and the rumble of thunder at 4 a.m. did not bode well for the scheduled hike along the cloud-high ridgeline of Potts Mountain. But the rain subsided and later in the morning a half dozen hearty males were bouncing along the rocky dirt Forest Service road 176 in high-carriage vehicles hoping that the grey overcast would give way to blue skies.

The trail, an old infrequently used jeep road, which makes a good hiking path, starts at a point near the mountain crest. One mile into the hike we treaded into the woods a few yards off the main trail to peer at a small, boggy pond whose open surface had virtually disappeared under a proliferation of big-leaved bog plants. Leonard Adkins, in his guide to the hiking trails in southern Virginia, has noted that this pond is of natural origin – a true rarity.

The desire for maintaining dry feet must have killed any urges toward botanical or other investigation since after a minute or two we were back on the trail. A few yards beyond the pond is an area studded with huge rocks brought in by the Forest Service in an attempt to thwart off-road vehicle users from doing further damage in the area.

About three miles into the hike we reached a rocky overlook at 3835 feet elevation (according to Greg's GPS device) which, in fair weather, would have given great views to the west. But the grey overcast surrounded us and would remain for the duration of the hike.

Continuing along the trail beyond where the Lipps Branch Trail comes in from the valley to the east, we reached an extended open and scenic grassy area with succulent dewberries and huckleberries, and which was bordered at the far northeastern end by a park like area crowned by a canopy of large oaks.

A little beyond this point the trail began to plummet. So we turned and trekked back to the rocky overlook for lunch.

Starting back to the trailhead a little bushwhacking was irresistible. Mark led us through vicious cat-brier and over an uneven, ankle-twisting forest floor toward a rocky prominence that had been spotted from our lunch site. The two smart ones in our bunch, Greg and Cyrus, hung back near the jeep road -- but an extensive area consisting of slabs of bare rock near the crest of the mountain was discovered, although these were probably not the rocks we were angling for. Future investigation may turn up another good overlook.

Sunday, July 31, 2005 1:00PM Roaring Run

Georgia Gallaher (leader), Gene Downs (assistant)
No report

August 4 - 8, 2005 8:00AM Angel's Rest Rehab with Konnarock Crew

Charles Parry, Bill Floyd, Fred Coughlan, Jesse Mann, Amanda Grau, Dave Hicks, Dana Helsley, Suzanne Barnett, Bill Gordge, Malcolm Black, Fred Meyer, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Bob Stimson, Jerry Kyle, Laura Bellville and Konnarock Crew: Casey Bicanick, Christine Hoyer, Becky Brown, Pat

On Thursday morning Bill and I met Fred, Jesse and Amanda at the parking area. Amanda said that she needed to wait for the crew to arrive, so the rest of us headed up the mountain to replace a decaying set of log steps with rock ones. The location of this site was about 3/4 of the way up the mountain. As the crew was working about 1/3 the way up, we did not see them that day. We got 5 or 6 rock steps set the first day and needed all 4 people and the come-along to move some of the rocks. On day 2 Dana replaced Jesse, but we still had 4 of us working on the steps. We also had 6 others working with the crew. By quitting time, we had the steps almost complete, so we packed some of our tools down to the lower site. On Saturday, we had 8 people out, but only Fred and I went up to finish the steps. We also had to replace a rock step further down that had come loose. We finished shortly after lunch, having set 13 steps on our new set. We went down and worked with the crew for a couple of hours, before breaking off to

go to the corn-boil. On Sunday, we had 6 club members and all of us worked on the new switchback with the crew. It was big rock moving day as we took out several large boulders that were in the path. We did not quite finish the switchback, but hope to do so on a late August work-hike.

**Sunday, August 7, 2005 1:00PM
Otter Creek Trail**

Kenny Garrett (leader), Mary Lou Gaminde (co-leader), Brittany Garrett, Carl Cornett, John Miller, Sherry Kessel, Carolyn Baratta, Marianne Demkó & Zetta Campbell

The day was slightly overcast and beautiful. The temperatures were very tolerable considering it was early August. Nine adventuresome souls went for a nice stroll starting at the Otter Creek Campground. There were numerous creek crossings, but only Ms. Brittany got a little wet from a slip on a slanted rock. There were two tunnels under the roadways along the creek. Then we climbed the one small hill located on this walk. Carl, Brittany, and I decided to do a little rock scrambling along the way. Upon arrival to Otter Lake, everyone decided to take the trail around the lake which probably added a quarter mile and some great views. We then followed the creek to the Parkway Visitors Center at the James River. We took a leisurely stroll on the foot bridge that's suspended below the Parkway bridge. We then regrouped and shared a watermelon at the picnic area before making the drive back to Roanoke. We all agreed this is a great hike for all age groups and skill levels.

**Sunday, August 14, 2005 8:00AM
Cove Branch, Potts Arm Loop**

Greg Tinaglia (leader), Carl Cornett (co-leader), Dianne McVane, Cyrus Bakhit, Paul Jones, Mark Tuggle, and 4 additional participants (sign up sheet inadvertently lost).

We met at the Orange Market at 8:00am. Everyone arrived promptly to enable us to get a good start driving North on Rt. 311 to New Castle. From there we took back country roads to Forest Service road #76 that climbed the East side of Potts Mt. to the intersection for Cove Branch. We parked our cars here and started our hike at

9:20am along the Forest Service road to Cove Branch trail. It was a sunny warm day and the stream-side hike was beautiful, remote, and very private. The water levels were lower than is usual due to some recently dry conditions. When the trail intersected Potts Arm trail, we took that trail up to Potts Arm and rested in a pretty grassy bald on the ridgeline of Potts Arm. We then hiked up the arm to the top of Pott's Mountain (having received special permission in advance to pass through some private property) to Potts Mountain road. We then went the short distance to the Hanging Rock trail and proceeded to Hanging Rock Overlook, which is a rock outcropping at 3700 feet providing a good view of the valley below containing Shawver's Run Wilderness. After having lunch, we hiked back to the road and north to the Cove Branch Trail intersection 1 mile north on Pott's Mountain road and completed our circuit by hiking back down to our starting point, completing 7.5miles. All who came enjoyed the day's adventures.

**Sunday, August 14, 2005 1:00PM
James River Foot Bridge to Auto Bridge**

Bobbie Stichter (leader), Gary Bible (co-leader), Carolyn Baratta, Janie Bible, John Bible, Trent Bible, H.R. Blankenship, Chet Chandler & Marianne Demkó

It was a very hot Sunday in August but the hike turned out to be delightful. We crossed the James River Foot Bridge and then hiked along the James River where we saw a large group tubing in the river. Then we hiked along Matts Creek to the Matts Creek Shelter. There John and Trent enjoyed playing in the creek. A brown lizard stayed on a tree at the shelter with his mouth open most of the time. We returned to the old A.T. trail now called the Matts Creek Trail. We kept a moderate pace all afternoon and took many water breaks. Most of the time we were hiking in the shade. It was a pleasant hike for a hot summer day.

**Sunday, August 21, 2005 8:00AM
Dragon's Tooth Parking to Trout Creek (Rt. 620) via Rawies Rest , 113-Mile Hike # 6**

Mike Ferguson (leader), Lois Smith, Diane McVane & Laura Montague

It was over 70°F by 8:00 and even with the threat of rain, the clouds failed to slow the rising temperature. We encountered two blowdowns on the blue blaze trails, one before the intersection with the boyscout trail, and the other soon after.

The hike was enjoyed by all even though we couldn't find the nudist who was reported to be sunbathing on Dragon's Tooth.

Sunday, August 28, 2005 8:30AM
Angel's Rest Area Work Hike

Charles Parry (leader), Maurice Turner (assistant leader), Bob Stimson, Jerry Kyle, Bill Gordge & Dana Helsley

Our goal for the day was to finish the second switchback that had been started with the Konnarock Crew earlier in the summer. Actually, not too much remained. A short amount of trail on each end remained to be dug and some steps needed to be installed where the trail intersected the old log road. The one catch was that the trail that needed to be dug on the lower end was full of boulders. Upon arriving at the site we divided into a digging crew and a rock crew of three persons each. However, some of the time all of us were involved with rock moving. We needed to use the come-along to put two of our step rocks into position. By mid-afternoon we had four new rock

steps in place and the trail mostly dug. Maurice and I blazed the new trail while Dana scraped off blazes on the old route. From this switchback on up our rehab work on the trail is close to complete. We still need steps in a couple of places. However, from here on down there is still considerable work to be done.

Sunday, September 4, 2005 8:00AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Andy Layne
Trail (Rt. 779) 113-Mile Hike # 4

Homer Witcher (leader), Charlie Scharnberg (co-leader), Shelley Himel, H.R. Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Fred Meyer, Kris Peckman & Bob Peckman

It was a good day for a hike, as most days are, if the alternative is going to work. We actually wound up having two separate hikes, as I couldn't rein in Carl and H.R. who wanted to keep moving at a good pace. Reluctantly, I agreed to hike with them and after hiking about two miles, we never saw the other six, until the hike was over. We probably all enjoyed the hike as it is rather scenic, but I never got the chance to find out, as it was over with rather soon. The hike is actually 12.1 miles.

Hike-a-thon for Read Mountain
Sunday, October 2 2:00 PM
Bonsack Elementary School

The 2005 Hike-a-thon is a fund-raising event of the Read Mountain Alliance to raise money to purchase the upper slopes and ridge line of Read Mountain. The goal is to set aside the mountaintop as a public preserve for everyone to enjoy. All hikers must have sponsors. Those sponsored for \$25 or more will receive a "Take a Hike-a-thon" T-shirt. Tax-deductible checks should be made out to the Western Virginia Land Trust and marked for the Read Mountain Alliance.

The hike of approximately 3 miles is moderate difficulty starting with a steep ascent in the first half mile. Hikers should bring water. Those under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. At registration, hikers will be asked to sign a release for the private landowners who have given us permission to hike across their property. All hikers please pre-register by calling 977-4540 or by registering on the web site: www.readmountain.org.

Sunday, October 2, 2005 Bonsack Elementary School

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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

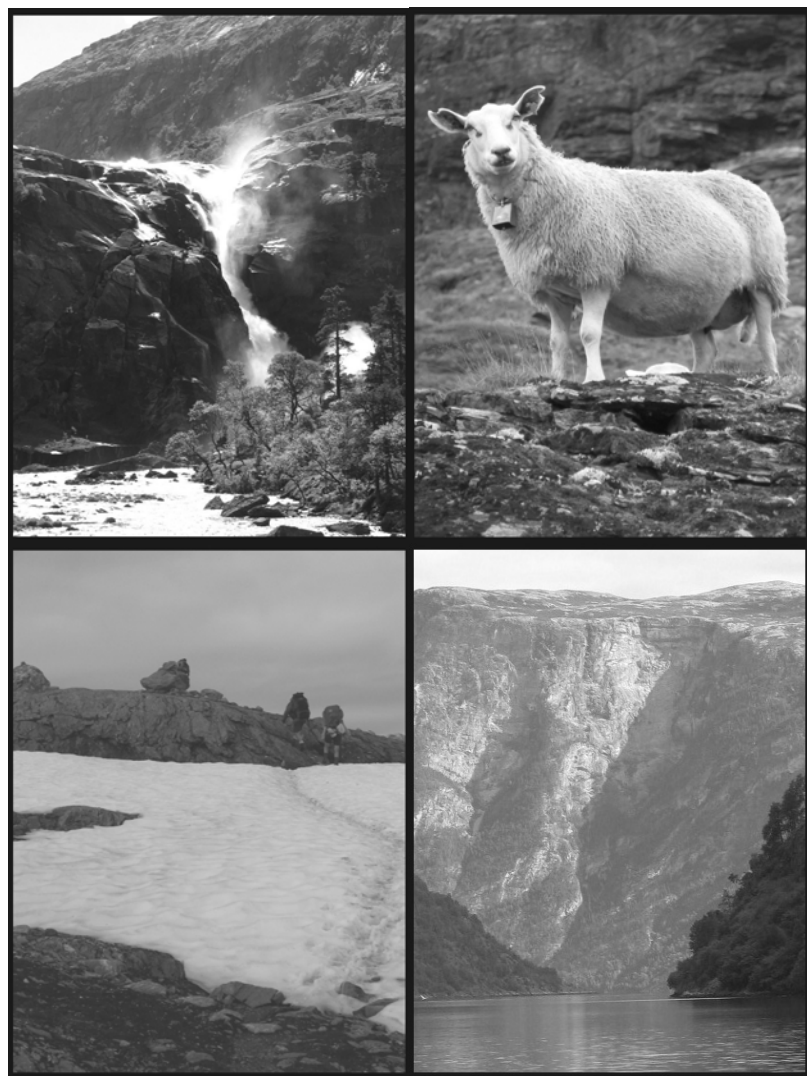
Names(s) _____

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



Holiday Banquet Preview Pictures from Norway

Holiday Potluck Dinner

Saturday, December 10, 6:00 pm

The holiday Potluck dinner will be at Christ Lutheran Church on the corner of Brandon and Grandin Avenues at 6:00 PM. The Club will provide beverages and table service. Club members will provide a dish to share.

This is one of the few social events we have in the year. Come see what your friends look like without a pack and boots!

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

Bob and Kris Peckman will present a slide show on their recent hiking trip to Norway. See the high plateaus, the mountains, the deep fjords, and water, water everywhere.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 (540)

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CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

Saturday, December 10
Holiday Potluck

WORK HIKES

Sunday, October 30 - 8:30 AM
Sawtooth Ridge

Sunday, November 13 - 8:30 AM
Brush Mountain

Sunday, December 11 - 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain

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.)

Monday, October 24, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Bob & Kris Peckman

Monday, December 5, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Homer & Therese Witcher

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