

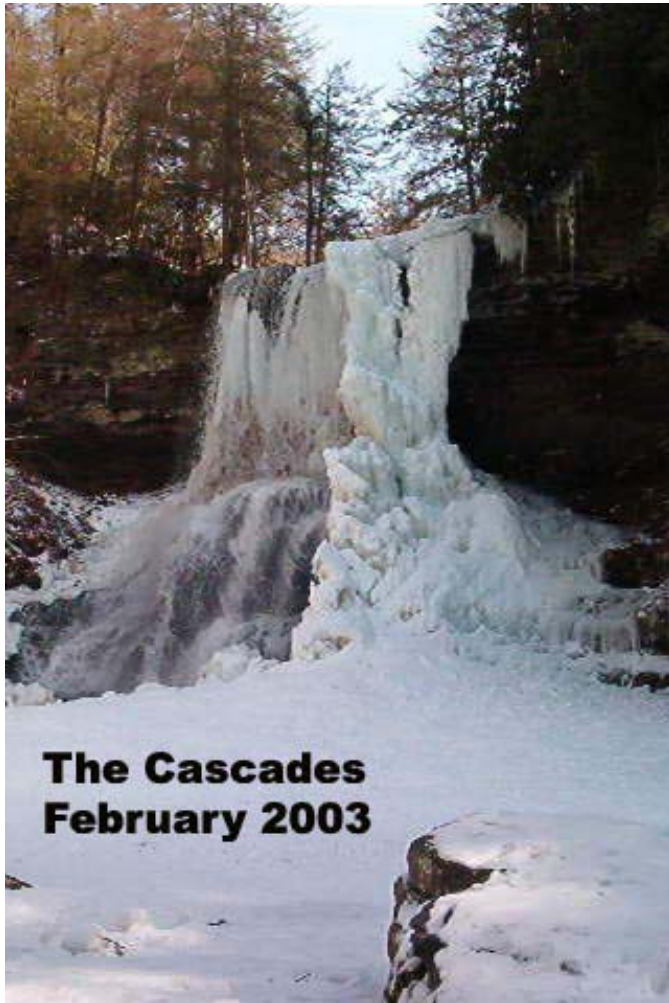
TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB



Winter 2007

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
February 2003**

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TRAIL BLAZER

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Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Deborah Carroll
Laurie Spangler

Susan & Steve Carter
Don & Nikole Cavendish

Steven Tomaziefski
Christine Munns

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

Mervin Brower

President's Message

The ATC is about partnering.

In mid-November three club board members (Liz Belcher, Charles Parry and I) met with representatives of the Jefferson National Forest (Cynthia Schiffer, Jesse Overcash and Dave Hrdlicka) and ATC Blacksburg staff (Teresa Martinez and Dave Schilling). On the agenda, among other things, was the status of a particular piece of AT property and its agricultural lease in the Sinking Creek Valley at the Route 42 crossing, a routine sort of issue we deal with on a regular basis.

The meeting started in the early afternoon at the Jefferson National Forest office. While in the office, around a large conference table the discussion rambled; and I doubted that we would ever reach a consensus on our objectives and methods to achieve the best solution to the problem of the day. But later, when we shifted our meeting to the site and as we walked that section of the Trail, the pieces all came together. The AT is a unique treasure, and those of us who each play a small role in its stewardship, always seem to figure it out one way or the other while on it. It's not just about Federal/State regulations, club policies or personalities, or ATC standards, although balancing these is not always easy. It's about the vision of the AT that we all share and the land and communities

that it passes through. We enjoyed the fantastic views and talked as we walked about the neighboring farms, houses, forests and pastures, and about the family that has leased the land for pasture and hay for years, and the views, trail conditions, location and maintenance of the AT as it traverses the beautiful Sinking Creek Valley.

Before the sun set and we returned to our other lives, we had developed a plan, satisfactory to all, within Federal regulations, sensitive to our friends and neighbors in Sinking Creek, and most importantly a plan that was not just going to maintain the AT there but in the end will improve the quality and character of this small section of the AT.

I have been fortunate to have worked with the ATC for almost ten years; and while no organization is perfect, I am continually amazed that this one does so well, with so many Federal and State partners, the ATC, the clubs, townships, counties, thousands of private land owning neighbors and of course our AT Volunteer maintainers whose tireless efforts keep all the trail open and usable. I have learned that our "common cause" of protecting the AT and our love for that well trodden footpath in the woods is what makes it all possible.

Roger Holnback

Trail Supervisor's Report

For the year Oct. 1, 2005 to Sept. 30 we had 49 people work 2046 hours on Forest Service land and 62 people work 1334 hours on Park Service lands. As 15 people worked on both types of lands we had $49+62-15 = 96$ people work 3380 hours on trail maintenance and construction. We give awards of a RATC hat to those who work 4 days, an RATC T-shirt to those who work 7 days and both to those who work 9 days. Those earning a hat this year are: Bob Foutz, Kenny Garrett, Frank Haranzo, Linda King, Kris Peckman and Maurice Turner. Nobody earned only a T-shirt, but Laurie Adkins, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Fred Coughlan, Chase Davidson, Bill Floyd, Ralph Hart, Dana Helsley, Dave Hicks, Jerry Kyle, Charles Parry, Mike Vaughn and Homer Witcher earned both. We owe a big thank you to all of these people. Let's see if we can get more people on this list next year.

This summer we will begin working on the Angel's Gap relocation. The dates of the Konnarock visits are: June 7-11, July 12-16 and August 2-6.

National Park Service Cumulative Awards

A few years ago NPS started giving cumulative service awards to trail club members who had worked certain numbers of hours. The rules are 40 hours a pin, 125 hours a second pin, 250 hours a patch, 500 hours a hat and 1000 hours a vest. You start over again once you reach 1000, so several of the long-term members are on their second trip. Any kind of work that you do for the club counts, including trail work, hike leading, attending meetings, helping with the socials, club officer's duties, etc. This years winners of a pin at 40 or more hours are: Laurie Adkins, Leonard Adkins, Carl Cornett, Diana Christopulos, Fred Meyer; a pin at 125 hours are: Laurie Adkins, Dick Clark, Bill Floyd, Bob Foutz, Bill Gordge, Bob Stimson, Mike Vaughn, Therese Witcher; a patch are: Larry Austin, Ralph Hart, Jerry Kyle, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Homer Witcher; a hat are: Blanche Brower, Charles Parry; a vest is: Fred Coughlan. Congratulations to everyone. Several more will reach these milestones next year.

Charles Parry

Hikemaster's Report

Winter has arrived. Along with cold weather and shorter periods of daylight, the new season offers good hiking possibilities. The bugs on the trail are long gone and you don't have to worry about overheating on long uphill hikes. The clear winter days also offer hikers the best visibility of any season.

The club maintains a full hike schedule throughout the winter, with two hikes being offered each weekend. Only unusually bad weather, such as high winds or heavy snow, will force the cancellation of our winter hikes.

Winter hikers should be prepared for changes in the weather. Dress in layers, so you can take items off if you get too warm. Avoid cotton clothing. Cotton does not provide much warmth and also dries slowly if you have been sweating. Carry rain gear and waterproof matches in your pack. With the

shorter days, it's a good idea to also take a headlamp or flashlight, in case you underestimate the time required for the hike and are still out in the woods after dark. You should make sure to let someone know where you are going on your hike, particularly if you will be hiking alone.

The most recent edition of Backpacker magazine has an article "The Best Day Hikes in America". Among the top twenty hikes, which includes hikes in the Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, and the Rockies are two hikes in Virginia. Number six on the list is the Mt. Rogers Trail in the Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area. Hike number 13 is the Old Rag Loop Trail in Shenandoah National Park. Both of these hikes have been on the club's schedule in recent years. Hopefully they will be on the club calendar again in future months.

Mike Vaughn

News from the ATC FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRAIL MANAGERS EXPAND PARTNERSHIP

TO MONITOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES ALONG THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- It stretches for nearly 2,200 miles, a ribbon of mountains and meadows, forests and fauna. But scientists, hikers, and land managers say the Appalachian Trail is more than a footpath.

Passing through 14 states and eight national forests from Georgia to Maine, including a 90-mile stretch through Massachusetts, it is also a living laboratory that could help warn 120 million people along the Eastern Seaboard of potential environmental problems.

That's why several organizations have launched a project to begin long-term monitoring of the environmental health of the trail, with plans to tap volunteer "citizen scientists" and their professional counterparts.

"It's somewhat like the canary in the coal mine, in the sense of using it as a barometer for environmental and human health conditions," said Gregory Miller, president of the American Hiking Society, based in Maryland.

The Appalachian Mountains are ideal for the project because they are home to one of the richest collections of temperate-zone species in the world, and the trail has a natural diversity that is nearly unsurpassed in the national park system. It also has different ecosystems that blend into one another, hardwood forests next to softwood next to alpine.

The idea for the Appalachian Trail Mega-Transect has support from the National Park Service and the US Forest Service, Cornell University, the National Geographic Society, and a beauty products company, Aveda Corp.

"We're really after two things," said Brian Mitchell, a coordinator with the Park Service's Northeast Temperate Network in Woodstock, VT.

"We want to get a better understanding of what's happening on the trail so we can better manage it," Mitchell said. "The other side is we want to take the lessons we learn from the trail and show people that what's happening on the trail does actually affect us."

High ozone levels, for example, can reduce photosynthesis and growth and speed up aging and leaf loss in plants. In humans, the levels can affect the lungs, respiratory tract, and eyes, and can increase susceptibility to allergens.

In addition, atmospheric deposition -- airborne sulfur and nitrogen that drop from rain and snow into soil -- can affect farming.

Dave Startzell, executive director of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in Harpers Ferry, said smog and air quality in the Great Smoky Mountains are good examples of what people need to know.

"People will read that on 25 or 30 days in a given year, it's considered unhealthy to walk on the Appalachian Trail," he said. "We think that's going to grab people's attention more than if they just read about air quality trends."

"It's one thing for people to read about the decline of neotropical migratory bird species . . . it's another thing when people learn about that firsthand," Startzell said.

Condensed from A Boston Globe article on November 26, 2006. For the full article see: http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2006/11/26/appalachian_trail_could_be_canary_in_coal_mine_for_east/.

Laura Belleville

Hike Reports

Sunday, July 23, 2006 – 1:00 PM Petites Gap To Sunset Field

Mervin & Blanche Brower (leaders), Paul Blaiklock, Liz Wicks, Vada Sarsfield, Zetta Campbell, Carl Cornett, Maurice Turner, Fred Meyer and Mary Gilbert

The hike started from Market Square East on Route 460. We organized the car switch at the parking lot to leave one car at Sunset Field and then drive on to Petites Gap. On our way out we saw a young fox that looked like he had rabies, since he turned around and hissed at us. The weather was sunny and in the low eighties. We met 22 people and one dog on the trail, which seem like a lot for this time of year. The summer flowers were out. We got pictures of tiger lilies with butterflies on them. We had wild columbines, daisies, Queen Anne's lace, yellow sweet clover and others that I did not know. We saw one large green moth lying in the middle of the trail.

Sunday, September 10, 2006 8:00AM Mau-Har Trail and Three Ridges Loop

Kris Peckman (leader), Kenny Garrett (most able assistant), Larry Austin, Maya Bohler, Carl Cornett, Jim McNeeley, Bob Peckman, Mike Vaughn

We were all a bit apprehensive at the beginning of the hike, as the weather was warm and humid, and we knew this would be a tough hike. But by the time we reached the ridgetop, a good breeze kept it comfortable. The hike starts with a stiff uphill climb on the A.T. to the intersection with the Mau-Har Trail, which then gives a variety of ups and downs. On the switchbacked descent to the tributary of Campbell Creek, Mike stepped into a yellowjackets' nest and got three bites. Maya was buzzed and I got one bite. Most of us stopped to visit the little waterfall, then continued on the strenuous climb up beside the creek (yearning for a swim) to the Maupin Fields shelter. During this climb Bob, suffering from sleep deprivation, lagged so far behind that he decided, prudently, to turn back rather than finish the hike, which involves a lot more uphill. I scurried ahead and met the group having lunch at the gorgeous view about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up to the summit of Three Ridges, turned over leadership of the hike to Kenny, and headed back to join Bob.

The hike participants reported that along the way Carl befriended a black snake, which I understand he found downright cuddly. (I think there are pictures to prove it!). After lunch they hiked up to the summit, then a long downhill to the Harper's Creek shelter, where

they paused a bit, then uphill to the intersection with the Mau-Har Trail (completing the loop), then downhill to return to the Tye River suspension bridge. There they all cooled their tootsies, and some went into the water, clothes and all. They observed a wolf spider by the creek.



Kenny took his duties seriously, going back three times to check on lagging hikers (the last ones being Bob and me). We finished up by consuming a Franklin County watermelon and congratulating Jim on successfully completing his first RATC hike, which just happens to be one of the toughest on the RATC schedule.

Sunday, September 10, 2006 1:00PM Roaring Run

Jean Warren (leader), Mike Ferguson (co-leader), Margaret, Billy & Natalie Ferguson, Debbie Smith, Pat Collsey, Zetta Campbell, and Sherry Kessel

What a beautiful day it was! At 1:00 PM there were only three of us standing in the parking lot. Eventually, three late arrivals came, and after a

Chinese fire drill of switching cars several times, we finally left at 1:20. If any of you have never been to Roaring Run, put it in your plans to go! Waterfalls are beautiful along the way, particularly those that cascade over sheer flat rocks. They didn't look real! The iron ore furnace was of great interest. "Hey Mike, what's the story of the furnace?" I asked. Well, the embellishments began, and we all joined in on stories ranging from the Joan-of-Arc era to the space age. We all enjoyed such a wonderful day with our new friends. Because it was a short hike (2 miles), some felt the need to get on a treadmill or go on another hike.

**Saturday, September 16, 2006 9:00AM
Curry Gap to Mountain Pass Road on Old AT**

Cancelled

**Sunday, September 17, 2006 8:00AM
Green Hill Exploratory**

Homer & Therese (leaders), Kris Peckman (assistant, aka the horde).

The hike started with the hike leaders having some difficulty finding the rudimentary trail leading up to the top of Green Hill mountain and the horde behind having some difficulty keeping pace. Upon reaching the top and going left when we should have gone right, which Therese hastened to let me know we are going the wrong way, we went hiking to the right. We found several rocky outcroppings with the last affording great views to the west of forested valleys and mountains. We had cool breezes and a beautiful day, didn't see anyone else, but did see several confused butterflies, and two disoriented houseflies, I think they also must have gone left when they should have gone right.

**Sunday, September 24, 2006 8:00AM
McAfee Knob Catawba Mt. Work Hike**

Charles Parry, Dana Helsley, Maurice Turner, Pat Guzik, Brian Burt, Steve Burt, Blanche Brower, John Cramer, Steve Photographer, Camcorder Operator. Roanoke College: Brian Chisom, April Roland, Shevee Mullen, Dominique McCoy, Helen O'Neill, Sarah Labadie, and Brooke Barasanti

We met at the 311 parking area around 8:45, took a few tools and walked across the road to take a look at our work for the day. The first switchback corner was one place that I wanted to work on. People had been cutting off the corner for years and I wanted to stop it. After a brief discussion Dana, Brian and Steve were assigned to work there while Pat, Maurice and I retreated back towards the highway to work on a new set of steps. Shortly, the press arrived: two photographers and a reporter. They are working on a

story for the paper as well as some tapes for Roanoke.com. Before noon we were finished with these projects. I pointed out to Dana another place to put in steps. Just about noon the Roanoke College group arrived. I had 12 treated 8-foot 6x6's in the back of my truck to be used as water-bars. I drove my truck a short distance up the fire-road. We decided to take four of them up to the top of the ridge and install them as water-bars. After showing them how and where I wanted them put in, I broke for lunch while they split up into small groups to work. Blanche arrived about then and helped with the project. They left about 2:00 with all four bars in place. Shortly thereafter, Dana's group finished with their steps and it started to rain. We decided to leave, but I decided to remove a small rock near a tree that I had stubbed my toe on. Maurice was helping and just as I tossed the rock to the side I got stung on top of my head right through my hat. Maurice noticed the offending insects were coming out of a hole in the tree above our heads. We got out of there before any more damage was done. We built 20 steps and 4 water-bars despite an early quitting time.

**Sunday, September 24, 2006 1:00PM
Catawba Valley Trail (Rt. 779) to Stone Coal Gap (SR 748)**

Bobbie Stitcher & Lois Smith (leaders), Mervin Brower, Debbi Carroll, Lynne Jacoby, Henry McLain, Charles Musgrove

We left a car at the Andy Layne parking lot on Va. 779. Then we drove to the top of a mountain to get to the beginning of the hike at Stone Coal Gap. A gentle rain began to fall and continued through the beginning of the hike. We stopped and had a snack at an opening with good views of mountains on both sides and the cement plant. We hiked on and soon came to the intersection of this trail and the North Mountain Trail. We descended for over two miles to the parking lot, drove back to get the other cars and then drove home. It was a very nice hike, demanding but fulfilling on a Sunday afternoon.

**Sunday, October 1, 2006 8:00AM
North Mountain**

Homer & Therese Witcher (leaders), Kris Peckman (assistant), Bob Peckman, Pat Guzik, Carl Cornett, Maya Bohler & Fred Meyer

North Mountain is located 47 miles from Daleville up a winding dirt road, making it not too accessible, but a nice hike anyway. As usual, it was a congenial group, which always makes for a better hike. The highlight of this hike is reaching rocky outcroppings 3.5 miles into the hike. These outcroppings allow for great views of

Allegheny County and Rockbridge County. The distant mountains of West Virginia are also visible. Since we didn't have any rock scramblers, we had an enjoyable lunch sitting on the rocks conversing on whatever subject that came up. We also agreed to come back and do an extended hike in this area. Homer and Therese's navigational skills may be in question by some of the group, but that's another story.

**Sunday, October 1, 2006 1:00PM
Carvin's Cove Boat Launch to Cemetery**

Georgia Gallaher (leader), Lynn Bryant (co-leader), Maurice Turner, Peggy Bryant, Penny McIver, Pat Cousins, Sherry Kessel, Merry McKissick, Tim Lawlor, Twila Briscoe, Linda Sutton, Dave Sutton.

The weather was perfect for our hike, and we had a good turnout of people. We hiked to the cemetery and enjoyed a snack there while some of our group checked out the dates on the old headstones. Part of our group went down through the woods to the lake. In the woods we found an old trash pit that held old jars, jar lids and soles of shoes.

**Sunday, October 8, 2006 8:00AM
Ribble Trail, A. T. Loop**

Mike Vaughn & John Miller, (leaders), Pat Guzik, Jim McNeeley, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Sheila Vaughn

It was cool and cloudy when we started on the hike. The first two miles is along Dismal Creek. The trail crosses the creek about a dozen times, mainly over footbridges. We passed two through-hikers that were heading south. They were planning on hiking 23 miles that day. We then started a steep climb up Sugar Run Mountain in the rain. We reached the overlook around lunch. Normally this offers spectacular views of the Wilburn and New River valleys. Unfortunately, it was completely fogged in. As we started down the mountain, some feeble sunlight began to shine through the clouds. This produced a beautiful effect on the Fall foliage. Pat said it looked like a watercolor painting. We reached the Ribble Trail at 7.5 miles and started a steep descent through rhododendron thickets. By the time we reached our vehicle the sun was shining in a brilliant blue sky.

**Sunday, October 8, 2006 1:00PM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to Tinker Cliffs**

Merivn Brower (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant), and Lois Smith

No one showed up for our hike at Daleville parking lot; I think the rain in the morning convinced them not to

hike. We then drove to the trailhead where we met Lois and then proceeded on our hike. The trail was very slippery in spots and muddy. It was cloudy when we started but the sun came out when we reached the top. We ate a snack on Tinker Cliffs, and then came back down. We met one hiker finishing the North Mountain –AT loop. It was a little dryer going down than coming up.

**Sunday, October 15, 2006 8:00AM
Laurel Creek Shelter Repair**

Kenny Garrett, John Miller, Charles Parry

John and I met at the Orange Market at Hanging Rock and headed out to meet Charles at the fire road off of Rt 42. The three of us then drove up the fire road until we were able to park fairly close to an access trail leading to the AT. We then hiked to the Laurel Creek Shelter with the needed materials and tools. We started by screening in the bottom of the frame of the moldering privy, and then had the task of sliding the heavy privy across to the other side. Charles was able to place some small round logs under the privy to assist with the task. Before finishing the task, we met a south bound through hiker who stopped to talk. We finished the day early and headed out to enjoy the rest of the afternoon.

**Sunday, October 15, 2006 1:00PM
Fallingwater Cascades/Johnson Farm**

David Sutton (leader), Hugh Hall (assistant), Linda Sutton, Debbi Carroll, Adam Cox, Carolyn Baratta, Marianne Demkó, & Pat Cousins

It was a beautiful sunny fall day. The hike finally began about 2:15 as we set our feet on the trail to Fallingwater Cascades. Water was flowing over the falls at a moderate pace and was quite scenic. Marianne stopped to observe some unusual mushrooms on the side of a tree. We made the loop hike here at the falls, which gave us more scenery on the way back. We drove to the Peaks Lodge for parking and then hiked to Johnson Farm. We stopped to photograph the deer in the grassy area. The tour of the farmhouse, once owned by the Johnson Family, provided us a window into rural living during the 1930's. We threw feathered corncocks into a basket, just as the residents might have for recreation. The hikes were a lot of fun.

**Sunday, October 22, 2006 8:00AM
Sawtooth Work Hike**

Charles Parry, Fred Coughlan, Maurice Turner, Blanche Brower, Dylan Linehan, Donald, Pam and Kaitlin Mooneyham

It was a mostly cloudy day, but no rain and the temperature was just right for working. I met the others at the farm gate off VA 785. We left Blanche's car there and made our way across the creek and up the hill with the two trucks. We parked at the edge of the woods and got out tools for the day. We planned to put in steps and rock water-bars on the south side of the first steep hill. We began work about two thirds of the way up the hill. We split into three groups with two working on steps and one working on water-bars. We were pleased to have the Mooneyham family, together with Kaitlin's friend, Dylan, all from Wilmington, NC with us for the day. Kaitlin is doing a high school senior project on the AT. As part of her project she wanted to spend a day working on the trail. She also wanted to talk with someone who had hiked the whole trail. As Fred has only 100 miles to go that was good enough. They were good workers and good students. By quitting time we had completed 18 new steps and two new water-bars. A few days later, we RATC members received a card from Kaitlin with a picture of the workers setting on the new steps.

**Sunday, October 22, 2006 1:00PM
Rocky Gap (Rt. 601) to Sinking Creek (Rt. 42)**

Bobbie Sticher (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Wayne Fulp, Mary Gaminde, Lynne and Bill Jacoby and Hooper, Henry McLain, David Miller, Ron Stanley, Andrew Stanley, Madeleine Taylor and Lucy, Beverly Williamson

The drive to New Castle and then on Va. 42 was beautiful on this fall day. We left a car near the AT on Va.42 then drove to Rocky Gap, passing the restored historical covered bridge, to start the hike. We began the hike ascending on an old woods road. At the top we continued on the crest of Johns Creek Mountain. We visited the White Rock formation with views of Salt Pond Mountain. At the tip of Kelly Knob we began the four-mile descent. We had a snack break at the Laurel Creek Shelter, continued on crossing Laurel Creek twice to begin the steep ascent out of the gorge. We passed an old abandoned home on the trail. We entered an open pasture finishing the hike. I would like to thank H.R. and Carl who did the car switch and had the cars waiting for us when we finished the hike. This was another demanding but very fulfilling hike on a fall Sunday afternoon.

**Sunday, October 29, 2006 8:00AM
Whetstone Ridge Trail**

Larry Austin (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Carl Cornett, H. R. Blankenship and Jim McNeeley

Due to a family commitment, co-leader Gary Bible was unable to assist on this hike. Kris Peckman graciously agreed to help drive and assist on the hike. We arrived at the trailhead around 9:30 and began this 11-12 mile hike on a rather windy day. The Whetstone Ridge Trail was in good shape and was well marked at the beginning and the end but not in the middle. However, since there were no other trails intersecting it, we felt we would not go astray. The trail follows the ridgeline for about 8 miles, which made the hiking rather easy. There were a few roller coaster sections but luckily the hills were not that long. The views from this trail were just incredible. One never ran out of views of mountains and valleys. We enjoyed the trail all to ourselves, as no other hikers were visible. We completed the hike around 3:00 p.m. This trail deserves to be included on another hike schedule as it offers such fabulous views, particularly when the leaves have descended.

**Sunday, October 29, 2006 1:00PM
Huckleberry Trail**

David Sutton (leader), Hugh Hall (co-leader), John Miller, Sherry Kessel, Lisa Nelsen, Pumpkin (border collie), and Zetta Campbell.

It was a cool and windy day for this urban hike. We began at the New River Valley Mall (the far south western corner). This paved and well-graded greenway is shared by skateboarders, bicyclists, joggers, walkers/hikers and others. Passing through areas of sycamore, maple, and white pine the greenway also follows a rail line (somewhat). Lowland areas have cattails and milkweed within them. After passing Lane Stadium we continued towards the Blacksburg library where we finally found restrooms. It was a fun walk and we had good company.

**Sunday, November 5, 2006 8:00AM
Mill Creek Trail to Angel's Rest via AT**

Dan (leader) & Kathy Phlegar, Mike (coleader) & Sheila Vaughn, Bob & Kris Peckman, John Miller, and Pat Guzik

The group met Dan and Kathy Phlegar, natives of Giles County, at Tangent Outfitters in Pembroke. Tangent Outfitters provided the shuttle to Narrows from the point where we parked cars near Pearisburg. The hike started at the Town of Narrows property on Mill Creek. We proceeded up an old logging road adjacent to Mill

Creek. The trail departed the old roadway and then ran along the creek where numerous waterfalls were observed. Once above the waterfalls we hiked along another old roadway until it intersected the Appalachian Trail. We hiked north on the AT and observed 3-4 overlooks in the vicinity of Angels' Rest. The overlooks provided beautiful views of the valleys below. The hike allowed us to see the new trail relocation on Pearis Mountain and the new constructed stone stair steps recently completed by Charles Parry and the Konnarock crew. The weather was great and the visibility was clear. With so many leaves on the trail it gave us a new concept of the phrase "Rustling Leaves".

**Sunday, November 5, 2006 1:00PM
Catawba Mtn (Rt. 311) to Sawtooth (Rt. 785)**

Bobbie Stitcher (leader), Linda Akers, Cindy Bowles, Zetta Campbell, Debbi Carroll, Diane Christensen, Carl Cornett, Jeanne Duddy, Lorrie Huffman, Lynne Jacoby, Sherry Kessel, Rod Liebl, Henry McLain, Linda Sutton, Maurice Turner, Nancy Utz, Jean Warren, Beverly Williamson

This was a perfect fall day for hiking. A large group of 18 hikers started from the parking lot of Va. 311. A car had been left where the trail crosses the Blacksburg Road. The views on both sides were spectacular. From one view we saw the Peaks and Flat Top. We entered the field at Beckner Gap to more views and could see Dragon's Tooth in the distance. We climbed quite a few stiles to get to the Blacksburg Road. We took the drivers to get the cars, came back and got all riders and returned to Roanoke. This was another wonderful hike on a fall afternoon.

**Saturday, November 11, 2006 8:00AM
Lee Hollow (Rt 621) To Trout Creek (Rt 620)
113 Mile Hike #7**

No Report

**Sunday, November 12, 2006 1:00PM
Roanoke Mountain**

Georgia Gallaher (leader), Sue Scanlin (co-leader), Jean Warren, Carl Cornett, Maurice Earles, Christy Straight.

The weather for our hike turned out to be cold and windy. Our hardy group did not mind this one bit. The colder weather actually made it easier going up the mountain. In hot weather I most always need to stop a few times on the way up. The views from the lookouts were spectacular due to the clear air in the valley. At the top we hiked the short trail through the woods and took a break at the highest lookout. On the way down

we all had fun as the wind blew the leaves around us.

**Sunday, November 19, 2006 8:00AM
Floyd Field to McFalls Creek on the Glenwood
Horse Trail**

Larry Austin & Maurice Turner (leaders), Lois Smith, Carl Cornett, Maya Bohler and Kris Peckman

We gathered at the Daleville Park & Ride at 8 o'clock. Although we had six hikers and it was an end-to-end hike with about a 12-mile car shuttle, we decided that we could squeeze four people in the back seat for the shuttle since everyone on this hike was slim. It worked out okay but we had to untangle a few body parts when we got to the starting point. This, of course, repeated itself at the end of the hike when we had to drive back to get the other car. We began the hike at Floyd Field and after about a mile or so, we had a slight snow shower. That ended rather quickly and the sun was in and out for most of the hike with temperatures in the upper 40's and low 50's. This was an easy hike since most of the initial five miles was a slow descent to Jennings Creek. After crossing Jennings Creek we had a fairly good climb for about 1.5 miles and then it was all downhill again for the remainder of the hike. This is quite a beautiful area. We had great vistas in several directions. The views of Flat Top and Sharp Top were quite impressive. The streams were flowing nicely and provided even more scenic beauty. The last couple of miles of trail had a lot of white pines and hemlocks, which sort of put one in a seasonal mood. It was interesting to note that after all the leaves drop, remaining grasses, ferns, moss and evergreens appear so much more vivid. We did not see much wildlife but did spot one buck probably trying to find a hiding spot for the next two weeks from hunters. We concluded hiking before mid-afternoon and all appeared to enjoy the day very much.

**Sunday, November 19, 2006 1:00PM
Black Ridge Trail**

Mervin & Blanche Brower (Leaders), Marianne Demkó, Zetta Campbell, Carolyn Baratta, Sherry Kessel

The hike started from Kroger's parking lot next to the Burger King at the corner of 419 and 221. The day was cloudy with temps of 40°F, which made for a nice walk but on the chilly side. With the weather being cold and no leaves the view from the top was spectacular. The wind made it that we did not want to stand around so we kept a steady pace and finished in about 1 ½ hours.

**Sunday, November 26, 2006 8:00AM
Sawtooth Work Hike**

Charles Parry, Maurice Turner (coleader), Dana Helsley, Mike Vaughn, Jerry Kyle, Julio Stephens, Steve Burt, Brian Burt, Blanche & Mervin Brower

Jerry and I met in the field just off VA 785. As we were waiting for the others Steve and Brian passed by and soon returned. I told them they could park in Cochran's driveway, which they did. The Roanoke group arrived before they got back. We loaded into Maurice's and my truck for the trip across the creek and up the hill. At the edge of the woods we got out the tools we needed and headed up the trail. The first work area was on the backside of the first peak. As we had 8 people we split into 3 groups working on different projects in close proximity to one another, so we could share tools. We were all working on rock steps. It was a beautiful day and a few hikers passed through, including one thru-hiker. By lunchtime we had made good progress. Julio, Steve and Brian departed, but were soon replaced by Merv and Blanche. In early afternoon Jerry and Mike had finished their job and so I gave them a new assignment of defining the trail route along the top of the hill. By mid afternoon, the rest of us finished our project and passed the other group in search of more work on the front side of the hill. We found a spot that needed steps but rocks of the right size were scarce. We got two steps in, but had to import a third large rock slightly up and across the hill. We decided to use the come-along, but progress was slow until Mike and Jerry arrived with the second rock-bar. Mike dug a place for the rock as the rest of us moved it. It went into place nicely and more importantly gave us a stopping place with useable trail that we could finish in our next trip in February. On the way out we had a bit of excitement as my truck got

stuck coming out of the creek. Most of us got muddy feet in the process of getting it out.

**Sunday, December 3, 2006 8:00AM
Sprouts Run/Pine Mountain Circuit**

Larry Austin & Kris Peckman (leaders), Fred Meyer, Maya Bohler, Jen Schaeffer, Bob Peckman, Lois Smith, Maurice Turner, John Lynham, & new / returning to Waynesboro, Stewart & Denise Talbert

The weather for this hike started out under overcast skies with temperatures in the mid-30's and concluded with overcast skies and temperatures in the upper 40's. We had two guest hikers from Waynesboro, VA (Stewart and Denise Talbert) who had moved from Portland, Maine to the area. Sprouts Run is all about the beautiful creek, its cascading waterfalls and the many pools of water it offers. It is quite a lovely trail following the creek all the way. After about three miles or so on the Sprouts Run Trail, we went off trail following the creek to its headwaters in a bushwhack sort of hike for about 1/2 mile. Our goal was to reach an old forest service road, which traverses Pine Mountain. Pine Mountain is all about ridge walking with great view of mountains and valleys to the East and West. From Pine Mountain, we could spot such well-known areas such as Apple Orchard Mountain, Devil's Marblyard, Sharp Top, Flat Top, Purgatory Mountain and the James River. Pine Mountain has four wildlife waterholes and we stopped at the first one for lunch. We were able to conclude the hike around 2:15 and enjoyed some fellowship coupled with hot chocolate and some sweets. It was a very pleasant hike with good hikers enjoying each other's company and conversation.

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 that 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, January 7, 2007 8:00AM
Cove Mountain & Little Cove Mountain Circuit**

8.2 miles, Strenuous, \$2.00 carpool fee
23 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, this hike offers creek side walking along a branch of Cove Creek, a stop at Little Cove Mountain Shelter and a view from a rock formation just a few hundred feet north of the shelter.

Dave Wickersham 774-0439
Maya Bohler 344-6588

**Sunday, January 7, 2007 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 that starts in the North Creek camping area, near Arcadia in Botetourt County. 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.

Jean Warren 384-6229
Georgia Gallaher 345-8700

**Sunday, January 14, 2007 8:00AM
Dickerson Gap (Rt. 635) to Symms Gap - AT**

11.0 miles, Strenuous, \$5.50 carpool fee
55 miles from Roanoke

The hike is located in Giles Co. From Rt. 635 we will ascend the Dickerson Gap trail to the AT and hike along Peters Mountain to Symms Gap. We will then take a jeep trail near Mystery Ridge back down to Rt. 635 near Goldbond.

Maurice Turner 334-2128
Kris Peckman 366-7780

**Sunday, January 14, 2007 1:00PM
Troutville (Rt 11) to Fullhardt Knob shelter**

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

The hike is located in Botetourt County. This up-and-back Appalachian Trail hike begins at a small parking lot on Route 11 at the Troutville town limits. After crossing railroad tracks, hikers ascend a grassy hill with excellent views. The trail then crosses a road and begins the climb to Fullhardt Knob. Shortly before the summit and shelter are reached, a side trail leads to a viewpoint.

Lois Smith 862-7370
Gary Bible 977-2954

**Sunday, January 21, 2007 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

.5 mile, Moderate, \$.00 carpool fee
5 miles from Roanoke

We will work on waterbars, etc. south of McAfee Knob.

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

**Sunday, January 21, 2007 1:00PM
Roanoke Valley Greenway Trail**

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

This hike is along a recently opened section of the Roanoke Valley Greenway Trail. It will go from Valley View Mall to downtown Roanoke.

Dave Sutton 774-0648
Hugh Hall 725-8874

**Sunday, January 28, 2007 8:00AM
Sinking Creek (Rt 630) to Lee Hollow (Rt 621),
113-Mile Hike #8**

10.4 miles, Strenuous, \$4.00 carpool fee
41 miles from Roanoke

Located in Craig County, the hike climbs up Sinking Creek Mountain, then follows the ridge, where rock piles and old apple trees remain from the days when even the top of the mountains had farms on them. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond.

John Miller 375-3250
Kenny 892-5786

Sunday, January 28, 2007 11:00 AM
Cascades

4.0 miles, Easy, \$5.00 carpool fee
 54 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike follows a trail which frequently crosses Little Stony Creek. The trail ends at the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. Usually the hike will go out on the creekside trail and return via the fire road. The Forest Service charges a nominal fee (\$2.00) to park at the trailhead.

Sue Scanlin 989-0497
Hugh Hall 725-8874

Sunday, February 4, 2007 9:00AM
Bearwallow Gap to Buchanan Horse Trail Parking

9.0 miles, Strenuous, \$2.50 carpool fee
 23 miles from Roanoke

This hike will start at Bearwallow Gap on the AT and head south for approximately 3 miles to Bobblet's Gap where we will descend on the Glenwood Horse Trail to the west about 1 mile and turn north on the Horse Trail for another 5 miles. The hike along the Horse Trail will pass mining sites with views of the valley and mountains to the west. If conditions permit, we can also take a side trip to the Pico Mines about 1/2 mile off the trail.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Kris Peckman 366-7780

Sunday, February 4, 2007 1:00PM
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, this will be an out and back hike to the Bryant Ridge Shelter on the A.T. This shelter is located on a scenic part of the creek. The shelter has three levels and is well worth seeing.

Kenny Garrett 892-5786
Ed Wallace 774-0175

Sunday, February 11, 2007 8:00AM
Trout Creek (Rt 620) to Dragon's Tooth
Parking Lot, 113-Mile Hike #6

7.6 miles, Moderate, \$1.00 carpool fee
 12 miles from Roanoke

The hike is in Craig and Roanoke County west of Salem. After crossing Trout Creek, we will go through a fire recovery area, pass by the Pickle Branch shelter, then ascend to the ridge, which we will follow around the crescent-shaped top of Cove Mountain to Dragon's Tooth with its great views and rock-scrambling opportunities. We will descend on the A.T. over Rawie's Rest (more rocks and great views) to the intersection with the blue-blazed Boy Scout Trail which will take us to the Dragon's Tooth parking lot.

Kris Peckman 366-7780
John Miller 375-3250

Sunday, February 11, 2007 1:00PM
Chestnut Ridge Trail

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

The hike is located 4 miles from Roanoke and 1 mile from the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a 5.4-mile figure-eight course around the Roanoke Campground behind Mill Mountain. The trail is well graded and surrounded by woods.

Bobbie Sticher 397-2760

Sunday, February 18, 2007 8:30AM
Sawtooth Ridge Work Hike

1.0 miles, Moderate, \$.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

We will be working on installing steps, water bars, etc.

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

Sunday, February 18, 2007 1:00PM
Daleville (Rt 220) to Hay Rock

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

Located in Botetourt County, north of Roanoke. Except for a short feeder trail, 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 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.

Merv and Blanche Brower 387-9732

Sunday, February 25, 2007 10:00AM
Onion Mountain Exploratory

4 - 6 miles, Strenuous, \$2.50 carpool fee
 27 miles from Roanoke

This hike will be nearly all bushwhack. We will start from the parking area of Sunset Field Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway and head east down a gated road to the site of the former Camp Kewanee clearing. From this point we will visit some of the sites of former buildings with their stone foundations. After this, we will head to the summit of Onion Mountain and down the side to a rock formation, which provides good views of Bedford Lake and the valley, and mountains. From there, we will continue to explore and locate some other rock cliffs. If you are in a hurry this day, do not come on this hike. We want to take our time and simply explore.

Larry Austin 254-2092
Lois Smith 862-7370

Sunday, February 25, 2007 1:00PM
Bennett Springs Loop Hike #1

6.0 miles, Moderate, \$.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 384-6229
Sue Scanlin 989-0497

Sunday, March 4, 2007 8:00AM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt 779) to (Rt 311) on the North Mountain Trail

10.4 miles, Strenuous, \$1.00 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
Linda King 342-2411

Sunday, March 4, 2007 1:00PM
Bottom Creek Gorge

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

Hidden away at the corner of Montgomery, Roanoke, and Floyd counties is the Bottom Creek Gorge Preserve on top of Bent Mountain. The Nature Conservancy has developed a network of trails that pass ponds, streams and meadows and follow tunnels of rhododendron that lead you around and down to the Bottom Creek George, then up to a vantage point to see Bent Mountain Falls flow from a mountain side.

Sue Scanlin 989-0497
Hugh Hall 725-8874

Sunday, March 11, 2007 8:00AM
Old Hotel Trail, Cole Mountain Loop

6.2 miles, Moderate, \$5.50 carpool fee
 57 miles from Roanoke

Located in Amherst County some 20 miles northeast of Buena Vista, this loop hike offers some of the most outstanding views anywhere in the area. The Old Hotel Trail trailhead is at Hog Camp Gap, roughly 8 miles from route 60 on a dirt and gravel road. The trail climbs steadily through woods and an open area, passing an A.T. shelter. During the stagecoach days there was an inn in this area, but nothing remains of it today. The trail intersects the A.T. at Cow Camp Gap. Following the A.T. north, the route climbs Cole (a.k.a. Cold) Mountain. The summit of Cole Mountain offers extraordinary views in all directions.

Dan Phlegar 389-1783
Kenny Garrett 892-5786

Sunday, March 11, 2007 1:00PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob

7.6 miles, Strenuous, \$.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. This is one of the premier day hikes on the entire 2,000+ mile length of the A.T.

Diana Christopulos 387-0930
Mark McClain 387-0930

Sunday, March 18, 2007 8:30AM
Sawtooth Ridge Work Hike

.5 miles, Moderate, \$.00 carpool fee
 6 miles from Roanoke

We will be working on installing steps, water bars, etc.

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

Sunday, March 18, 2007 1:00PM
Catawba Mt.. (Rt. 311) to Sawtooth (Rt. 785)

4.3 miles, Easy-Moderate, \$.50 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.

Bobbie Sticher 397-2760
Georgia Gallaher 345-8700

Sunday, March 25, 2007 7:00AM
Big Horse Gap to New River (Rt 460)
113 Mile Hike #11

12.5 miles, Strenuous, \$6.00 carpool fee
 60 miles from Roanoke

This hike will follow the A.T. north from Big Horse Gap near Dismal Falls in Giles County. It will go

along the ridgeline of Pearis Mountain, passing Doc's Knob shelter along the way. There will be several viewpoints along the way, including Angel's Rest.

Mike Vaughn 992-1350
John Miller 375-3250

Sunday, March 25, 2007 1:00PM
Bennett Springs Loop Hike #2

6.0 mile, 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. This hike follows a slightly different route than the Bennett Springs Loop Hike #1.

Jean Warren 384-6229
Gary Bible 977-2954



05/14/2006
View from House Mountain

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Annual Banquet and Business Meeting March 10th, 6:00 PM (Saturday)

Christ Lutheran Church, Corner of Grandin and Brandon

Dinner served promptly at 6:30 PM

BASTIANS BAR-B-Q of Salem is our NEW caterer this year!

Menu:

Herb baked chicken
Beef tips in gravy
Chopped pork
Mashed potatoes

Cucumber, tomato & onion salad
Green beans
Macaroni and cheese
Broccoli casserole

Green beans
Rolls
Cookie and brownie tray
Tea and lemonade

Speaker: Diana Christopulos with "Walking Into Spring" from Duncannon, PA to Hog Camp Gap, VA
with many wonderful shots of the flowers and other vegetation coming to life.
And it will be just before spring hiking season begins.

Reservation Form (Must be received by March 3rd)

Mail to: Carolyn McPeak
71 Viewmont Trail
Hardy, VA 24101

Please reserve _____ places at the RATC Annual Dinner Meeting - and make nametags as follows:

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ (\$14.00 per person, same low price).

Please make checks **payable to RATC**

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

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Alternate, Roger Holnback
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ATC-LT Coordinator - James River to New River and Director Western Virginia Land Trust, Roger B. Holnback
556-2919 rholnback@westernvirginialandtrust.org

ATC-LT Coord. New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
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Sir Speedy Printer
344-8550 robbiey@rbnet.com

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES**Annual Banquet****Saturday, March 10 6:00 PM****WORK HIKES****Sunday, January 21 - 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain**

-

**Sunday, February 18 - 8:30 AM
Sawtooth Ridge**

-

**Sunday, March 18 - 8:30 AM
Sawtooth Ridge****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, January 22, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Blanche & Merv Brower****Monday, February 26, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Roger Holnback WVLT Office****Monday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.
Hosted by Bob & Polly Stimson**

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