

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Fall 2011

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

CALENDAR OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

The Holiday Potluck

Saturday, December 3 – 6:00 PM

Details page 14

Dave Socky will present a slide show:
8 Days Hiking the Wild River Range, WY
With a video on Gannett Peak.

WORK HIKES

Sunday, October 16, - 8:00 AM

TBA

-

Saturday, November 12 - 8:00 AM

TBA

-

Sunday, DECEMBER 11 - 8:00AM

TBA

Hike Scheduling

Contact Mike Vaughn

992-1350 – mikeva999@yahoo.com

BOARD MEETINGS

(All members are always welcome.

Please let the host know you plan to attend.)

Monday, October 17, 7:00 p.m.

Hosted by *Blanche & Mervin Brower*

Monday, December 14, 7:00 p.m.

Hosted by *Bob Blankenbaker*

What's Inside...

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| New Members..... | 2 |
| Search and Rescue | 2 |
| The Shed Story | 3 |
| Hikemaster's Report | 4 |
| Hike Reports | 5 |
| Hike Schedule..... | 10 |
| Holiday Potluck | 14 |
| Membership Renewal | 15 |
| Contacting the RATC | 16 |

Please look at your address label.

If you do not pay dues, then there
will be nothing after your name.

If your dues are overdue
there will be a plea to pay.

Otherwise there will be your paid-up
year. Dues are due January 1.

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Vee Brownell

Cathy & Terry Lauver

Cheryl Penn

Ted Byron

Katherine Neal

Rudy & Karen Vietmeier

Linda Diane Harrison

Mark & Sybille Nelson

Adam Wood

Denise, Ben, Noah, & Meredith Dabney

And we thank you for making donations:

Ed & Judy Bradley

Joanne Derryberry

Tim & Vicky Gillow

And for giving in memory of Charles Parry:

Bonnie Pulliam

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

Bob Blankenbaker

Search and Rescue

Roanoke County is now rescuing hikers 5-6 times PER MONTH. Most of these are from the AT at Dragon's Tooth or McAfee Knob. Because rescues require many hours and people, this is a huge impact on County staff, particularly the Mason's Cove station. While some of the hikers are actually injured, others are lost or just ill prepared for the hike. The critical issues are often sufficient water, appropriate shoes, and enough daylight for the hike. Many of the newer hikers do not understand blazes and time necessary to cover trail distances.

RATC, with the other AT partners, will be addressing this issue in multiple ways: more blazes, more signs, more information at kiosks, better maps for rescue teams. Our focus is on prevention, and you too can help. As we approach fall hiking season, please step up to assist your fellow hikers:

Notice if others appear to be lost or too fatigued, ask if they need help;

Speak to hikers who may be inexperienced, explain what lies ahead;

Encourage everyone to stay on the trail and protect the environment (Lost hikers often followed an unmarked trail.);

Speak to those starting too late in the day, let them know the time needed, and be sure they have lights;

Encourage responsible behavior; and

Be prepared yourself by carrying adequate water, a jacket, and a light.

If you witness rescues or see something that needs to be done, please let the Board know so that we can continue to address prevention of lost hikers.

Be Safe,

Liz Belcher

The Toolshed Story - RATC's new toolshed at USFS workstation in Blacksburg

Before I start with the story, I have to admit that I never had the pleasure and honor to meet Charles Parry personally; my time with RATC began after he passed away earlier this year. Charles's loss left a huge gap in the club's structure which is even bigger than his footprint on the AT with his more than 34 years of dedicated trail work. Being Charles's 'apprentice' for a short time, David Jones stood up and took over the position and responsibilities as Trail Supervisor for the club's 123 miles of the AT. By doing that a lot of topics and questions needed to be covered and David realized he was missing two very important components of the Charles Parry equation: experience and connections. Charles simply knew someone everywhere, to help him out with anything. Unfortunately this knowledge is lost and it will be a hard, rocky way to build it up again, just like the AT itself.



By the first signs of the spring and after the first successful work hikes, I decided to give David a hand. After the loss of Charles a major problem the club faced was the storage of the trail maintenance tools. Formerly stored at his house, a new place was a key factor for the monthly work hikes. In a sad Saturday morning action, some club members picked up the tools and stored them temporarily at Roger Holnback's farm. Since Roger's place was not only convenient for us to pick up the tools for the Catawba work hikes, but also for several mice families that like the chainsaw boxes and the equipment duffel-bags for nesting, this option was only a temporary solution. Two big questions needed to be answered: how and where to store the tools permanently? The first part was covered relatively quickly due to a generous donation from

Roger Holnback and his wife Anne Howard; the club received an old barn shed that will be used as the tool shed in the future. The second was a little bit harder to cover, but thanks to the help of Cindy Schiffer (Eastern Divide District Ranger) and Joe Parrish (ATC Regional Representative) the tool shed found a new place at the U.S. Forest Service workstation in Blacksburg. Since this project was a TEAM effort from the beginning, active and dedicated club new-member Steve Burt volunteered to use his private heavy-duty equipment to move the tool shed from the Hanging Rock area to the USFS workstation in Blacksburg.

After some inventory and repair, the maintenance tools are in good shape and ready to use. The club has equipment for all kinds of trail work and can cover and tackle all issues along the 120 miles, BUT unfortunately those Pulaskis don't swing themselves and those Loppers don't clip alone... ☺! Hope to see you on one of the next work hikes.



For all the help and contribution to the success of this project I thank Cindy Schiffer and Joe Parrish for the easy and non-bureaucratic handling of the topic, Roger and Anne for the generous donation and the temporary storage of the tools, Steve Burt for providing the equipment and the move, David Jones for guidance and assistance and the temporary storage of the tools in Blacksburg, and last but not least the law enforcement personnel at the workstation for NOT arresting me when I was working at the tool shed in the evening, thanks very much guys ☺!

Timo Grüneberg

Hikemaster's Report

We are trying something new on our Fall hike schedule. Larry Austin will be leading two Wednesday hikes. These will take place on October 26 and December 14. Come out and hike during the week if you have time. See the hike schedule for details.

Our club will be participating in the first annual Outdoor Circus sponsored by RoanokeOutside. This is a festival that celebrates all of the outdoor activities available in the Roanoke area. We will have a booth at the festival on October 21 and will be co-sponsoring two hikes on October 22 with RoanokeOutside. You can find out more details about the festival at roanokeoutside.com.

When out on a hike have you ever seen a particularly beautiful tree, plant, or bird and wished you knew more about it? The Virginia Master Naturalist program can help you. It is a statewide corps of volunteers providing education and service to the management of natural resources. To become a Master Naturalist a candidate must complete a 40 hour course and do 40 hours of volunteer service. Course topics include ornithology (the study of birds) and botany (the study of plants). Visit www.Virginiamasternaturalist.org to find out more about the program.

As many who have followed the history of the AT know, one of its rich traditions are the hostels scattered along the trail. These are lodging facilities that provide basic, no-frills lodging and meals for hikers along the trail. One of the best ones, Woods Hole Hostel, is located on our section of trail. It is located in the beautiful Sugar Run Valley, south of Pearisburg, in Giles County. Woods Hole was opened in 1986 by Roy and Tillie Wood. It is now run by their granddaughter, Neville, and her husband Michael. They provide meals and lodging for thru-hikers and section hikers, as well as people who just want an out of the way place to stay for a few days. Visitors are always welcome. It is well worth stopping by if you are hiking in that area. For more information visit www.woodsholehostel.com.

I've recently read a couple of articles about common mistakes hikers make and how to avoid them. Here is a distillation of some of the most common ones:

Overconfidence: According to recent study about wilderness rescue, fatigue, darkness, and insufficient equipment accounted for 50% of rescue calls. Most of these situations could have been avoided by planning and staying within your limits. Hiking goals should be realistic, and should assume a hiking pace of about two miles per hour, less on uphill.

Not setting turnback time: If you don't reach your goal by the turnback time, turn back. This can help avoid being caught out on the trail after dark.

Poor packing: Using a gear checklist can help you avoid finding out you have left a critical piece of gear, such as a headlamp, at home. Several hiking sites have gear checklists on them for different types of hikes (backpacking, dayhikes). These include our club's web site and also backpacker.com.

Ignoring hot spots: Many hikers are in such a hurry that they ignore foot pain caused by friction. These "hot spots" can quickly develop into blisters, which can take a lot of the fun out of a day out in the woods. As soon as you notice a hot spot, stop and deal with it. Dry the spot off and apply moleskin or a blister bandage.

Neglecting to check the weather forecast: Severe storms can be life-threatening. You don't want to be caught out on an open mountain summit during a thunderstorm or among trees during a wind storm. Check the latest forecast at weather.com before heading out. Adjust your hike plans if needed. Remember, temperatures drop by about three degrees for every 1,000 feet of elevation.

Ignoring storm signs: Watch for weather clues, such as dark clouds coming in. In our area, these generally come from the west or south. If the weather starts to deteriorate, head for lower ground.

Getting separated: Many groups get into trouble when their members get spread out on the trail, particularly when there are much faster hikers in the group. A wrong turn at a trail junction or sudden bad weather can bring on a disaster, such as a lost hiker. The motto for group hikes should be: Start as a group, hike as a group, finish as a group.

Mike Vaughn

Hike Reports

Sunday, April 17, 2011 1:00PM Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob

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.
-Sorry, no report.-

Saturday/Sunday, June 19/20, 2011 9:00AM Roan Mountain Overnight Backpack

Mike Vaughn (leader), Sheila Vaughn, Dan Phlegar, Carl Cornett, Kevin Fuccella, Xinia Fuccella

After dropping off a car at the other end of the trail, we started out heading southbound on the AT from Carver's Gap, just below Roan Mountain. It was a sunny day, although isolated thunderstorms were predicted for both days. The parking lot was crowded with cars, most of whom were day hikers, out to see the rhododendron, which are in peak bloom at this time of year. At 5,500 feet Carver's Gap is just under 200 feet lower than the highest point in Virginia. Over the next two days we would be hiking the extensive mountain balds at elevations up to 6,000 feet. The AT along this section goes along the ridgetop that straddles the border between North Carolina and Tennessee.

After two miles of hiking we reached the short spur trail along Grassy Ridge. We stashed our packs and took this one mile side trail. There were extensive views all along the trail. The mountainside was covered with Catawba rhododendron in full bloom. It was a magnificent sight. Grassy Ridge is the only peak along the AT that is above 6,000 feet with a 360 degree view and no manmade structures on it.

Soon after we departed Grassy Ridge we heard the sounds of thunder in the distance. We quickened our pace and made it to a shelter just before the rain hit. After the rain passed we hiked the last mile to Overmountain Shelter, and pitched our tents for the night. The Overmountain Shelter is an old barn. It is fairly large and can sleep at least 20.

In the morning another storm rolled in and we got an early start hiking in the rain. Luckily the rain had stopped by the time we reached the open areas at Bradley Gap and Hump Mountain. Just as we neared the treeline a final strong thunderstorm blew

in as we stumbled along the slick trail down the mountain. We all made it safely off the trail by 12:30 pm.

Sunday, June 19, 2011 1:00PM Falls Ridge

The hike is located in Montgomery County, southeast of Blacksburg in Falls Ridge Preserve. Part of a steep, rugged ridge that rises from the valley of the North Fork of the Roanoke River, Falls Ridge Preserve boasts a spring-fed travertine waterfall approximately 80 feet in height. Salem Fault runs through the preserve, dividing it into two different rock types: Precambrian limestone and shale/sandstone. The corresponding difference in soil types generates a diversity of vegetation, particularly wildflowers and smaller flora.

- Sorry, no report -

Sunday, June 26, 2011 8:00AM Ribble Trail to Kimberling Creek (Rt. 606) Hike #13, plus Dismal Falls plus a bit more

John Merkwon (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Bob Peckman, Ivy Lidstone, Robert, Robin and Holly Lebarre, Cos Cosgrove, Rhin James and O'Possum. O'Possum being an Irish Basset Beagle (Bagle) who is one of the better trail dogs I have seen on the trail. (No wasted motion, plenty of energy and an inspiration to us all.)

Advertised at 7.8 miles and alerted to being a bit longer during sign-up, the hike ended up at 12.5 miles. Luckily (perhaps they were too tired), I was not lynched at the hike's conclusion. We did, however, have a nice day for a hike and I believe everyone enjoyed the day out, to include those who set new personal distance records. Surprisingly, many of the rhododendrons were in bloom at this time of year with some yet to peak next week, which really added to the beauty of the hike. I added a lollipop section across the road from Dismal Falls which added length and interest to this hike. The first section of the lollipop being abandoned forest service trail followed by a section with controlled felling to spoil the trail before it linked up with an active trail which is a integral part of a horse campground which is in this area. Sure enough, we did meet a family on horseback who were out riding.



Attached photo is of Robin, Robert and Holly Lebarre who have just finished trekking through about 100 meters of fallen trees.

**Sunday, July 10, 2011 1:00PM
Hoop Hole, Lower Loop**

Dave (leader) & Linda Sutton, Matt Sutton, Jo Ann Derryberry, and Fred Walters.

It was about 90 degrees when we began hiking but plenty of shade in the "canyons" which the trail passes through. There was even a small patch of some rhododendron still in bloom, deep into the trail. We could see small fish darting through the water as we jumped across the brook. There was evidence of the destruction caused by the woolly adelgid (sucking the sap out of the once abundant and beautiful hemlock trees). It is rare to see a healthy hemlock anymore. It was a great hike without incident.

**Saturday, July 16, 2011 8:00AM
Lick Run Greenway**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders), Georgia Gallaher, Rudy & Karen Vietmeier, Caryl Connolly, Dawn Lamb, Bill Sapp, Gloria McLaughlin, Pat Cousins, and Sherry Kessel

We started in front of the Target store on Valley View at 8:00 AM on a wonderfully cool and overcast morning, a welcome contrast to the unusually hot weather of recent weeks. Proceeding at a brisk pace toward downtown on the paved Lick Run Greenway, we made only one brief stop to inspect an old stone retaining wall in Lick Run at Brown Robertson Park near 10th St. NW. Arriving downtown, we enjoyed coffee and breakfast at Mill Mountain Coffee & Tea. Two of the walkers had

planned a visit to the Taubman museum, so we bade them good day, took a brief look at the market vendors' booths and renovated Market Building, then made our way back onto the greenway via the MLK footbridge, Henry and Gainsboro Streets. We got a glimpse of a deer on the way back to our starting point, darting into the dense woods along Lick Run.

**Saturday, July 23, 2011 8:00AM
Work Hike**

Timo Grüneberg, David Jones, Fred Meyer, Ron Sloan, Michael Sperber, Bob Stimson

We refurbished the bridge across War Spur Branch.

**Sunday, July 31, 2011 8:00AM
Kimberling Creek (Rt. 606) to Jenny Knob
(Rt. 611) 113 Mile Hike #14**

John Merkwan (leader), H.R. Blankenship, Carina Hughes, and Karen Callahan.



31 July 2011 - Carina & Karen by John Merkwan

After meeting, driving and staging cars we began our hike at 9:45 and saw a bear on the trail by 9:50. Everyone got a good look at the bear before he picked up our scent and bolted up the hill side. Other critters of note were a large box turtle on the top of the ridge and a large hornets' nest about knee high near the side of the trail. Plenty of Galax and ferns in the first part of the hike with a good variety of mushrooms throughout the hike. Although the heat had been oppressive earlier in the week, hiking conditions were not that bad. A shower had come through the night before so everything had a nice fresh look. We also hiked through a heavy shower toward the end of our hike which cooled things down and by the time we got to the car it had stopped raining so we had a chance to dry off and enjoy some post hike treats before heading back.

Saturday & Sunday, August 6&7, 2011 8:00AM
McAfee Knob Work Hike

Liz Belcher, Bruce Davidson, Roger Holnback, Leo Nunnink (Piedmont AT club), Ron Sloan, and Jerry Kyle

The Konnarock crew built cribbing to replace the first two bridges across the rock slabs. Club members worked on stabilizing the other bridges. A big thanks to Bruce Davidson for working with the crew every day both weeks!!



A great Konnarock crew with really great results

Saturday, August 6, 2011 6:00-9:00PM
Annual Corn Boil

In addition to the corn, we found once again that the RATC has a lot of folks who like to make and eat really great food. There will be much more December 3rd at the Holiday Pot-luck!

Sunday, August 7, 2011 1:00PM
Cascades National Scenic Trail

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike used trails which run along both sides of Little Stony Creek, which ends near the Cascades - an impressive waterfall. Sorry, no report available.

Saturday, August 13, 2011 8:00AM
Wolf Creek Greenway

Mark McClain, Diana Christopulos (co-leaders); Rudy & Karen Vietmeier, Caryl Connolly, Fred Meyer, Conrad Grundlehner, Sherry Kessel, Jimbo & Mary Harshfield.

Cloudy skies and cooler temperatures were greatly appreciated on this 4.5 mile walk on Wolf Creek Greenway. Breaking with the usual convention, we started our walk at the northeast end of the trail, where there is a small parking area on Mountain View Road (in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Parkway overpass). There's lots of variety on this

trail: peaceful thickets along Wolf Creek, busy county parks, pleasant neighborhoods.



A conversation with Jimbo - Mark McClain

There were lots of animals to be gawked at over the wooden fence at the farm, which the trail goes through (horses, ponies, goats, and a cat). The culvert passageway under Washington Ave. was a bit mucky, so part of the group of ten hikers opted to dodge the traffic and walk across the busy street. On the way back from the Hardy Road trailhead we stopped at Jerry's Family Restaurant and had a fabulous late breakfast before returning to our starting point.

Saturday & Sunday, August 13&14, 2011 McAfee Knob Work Hike

Eddie Baldwin, Steve Burt, Liz Belcher, Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, Jim Brown, Bruce Davidson (every day both weeks), Jeanne Duddy, Dave Foster, Bill Gorge, Jim Lewis, Berndie Lunsford, Fred Meyer, Jim Overholser, Jim Roberson, Hugh Scruggs, and Maurice Turner



Bruce Davidson, RATC Man of the Year

We worked with the Konnarock crew on rehabilitating the trail north and south of McAfee Knob. This entailed narrowing wide sections, cleaning and rebuilding water bars, installing new water bars, check dams and rock steps. This section of trail experiences high hiker traffic and needs to withstand the use.

Saturday/Sunday, August 21, 2011 8:00AM Punchbowl (BRP) to James River (Rt 501)

Mike Vaughn (leader), Sheila Vaughn, Adam Wood, Dan Dennison, H.R. Blankenship, Fred Meyer, Carina Hughes, and John Merkwan

After dropping off a car at the James River Foot Bridge, we continued on to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the A.T. crossing on Punchbowl Mountain. The hike started out with a steep climb to the top of the

mountain. We all were sweating after the climb on a warm morning. A small clearing provided views looking out to the west. It was a typical hazy summer day, so visibility was limited to about 5 miles. After a short rest, we set off for the summit of Rocky Row, which was about six miles into the hike. We reached the viewpoint there around lunch. As we were breaking from lunch we heard thunder off in the southwest. Luckily we got past Fuller's Rocks and started the steep descent off of the mountain before the rain hit. It is about a 2,000 foot drop back to the James River. The trail here has 21 switchbacks. It only rained for a short period, although it was even more hot and humid afterwards. We made it back to the James River around 3:00.

Both Dan and Adam are new to the club. This was their first hike with us. We hope they join us for more hikes!

Sunday, August 28, 2011 1:00PM Poor Mountain Nature Preserve

Maurice Turner (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant), Mervin Brower, H.R. Blankenship, Ivy Lidstone, Anne Hanna, Karen Coon, Paul Blaiklock, Bruce Sellars, Mike and Sheila Vaughn, Linda Harrison, Sue Scanlin, Carina Hughes, Dan Dennison, Dave Sutton, Greg Edwards, Walt and Laurel Kearns.

It was a large turnout for the first scheduled club hike to the Poor Mtn. Natural Area Preserve on this nice sunny afternoon. The hike took us on the Overlook Trail (blue blaze) which consisted of many rock steps that were built by the mid-week work group. Next we hiked the Canyon Trail (yellow blaze) which took us down to the bottom of the gorge. We hiked the connecting Cascade Trail (red blaze) back to the ridgeline onto the green blaze Piratebush Loop. The Loop trail took us back to the kiosk. We decided to hike the fireroad back to the parking lot for a change of scenery.

The 925-acre Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve hosts the world's largest known population of a globally rare shrub called the piratebush. The area has predominantly infertile, acidic soils derived from metamorphic bedrock. The slopes and ridges of this rugged area are vegetated with open-canopied pine-oak woodlands. On higher elevations most of the trees are low and gnarly, and include species such as chestnut oak, scarlet oak, bear oak, table mountain pine and pitch pine. All participants seemed to have enjoyed the hike.

**Sunday, September 4, 2011 8:00AM
Patterson Creek Area**

John Merkwan (leader), Kris Peckman (assistant), Bob Peckman, Carina Hughes, Fred Meyer and Maya Bohler.

This was an 11-mile loop hike assembled from pieces of the Elmore, Price Mountain, Kelly, Tucker Patterson Mountain, Helms and Loop trails along both sides of the northern section of Patterson Creek.

I think it was Mark Twain who said "Chances are that if you see a turtle on a fence-post, it didn't get there by itself". Today's hike featured a paisley box turtle on the very top of Price Mountain. I'm not sure how he got to the top of the mountain or why he was sporting a paisley shell but there he was in the hollow of a tree. There also was quite a bit of banter about my changing the hike description from strenuous to very strenuous and a normal ridge line walk versus an abnormal one. My thoughts were that one mountain is strenuous and two would be very strenuous especially on faint trails with limited markings. Whether the hike was strenuous or very strenuous, all agreed at the finish that they enjoyed the remote aspect of this hike.

(The damp start resulted in elegant spiderwebs studded with dew drops. Ed.)

**Saturday, September 10, 2011 10:30AM
Roanoke Valley Greenway**

Mark McClain, Diana Christopoulos (leaders); Conrad Grundlehner, Zetta Campbell, Linda Harrison, Bill Modica, Rhinda North.



10 Sept. 2011 - Zetta on the Roanoke River Greenway

On a glorious (but later to be rather hot) sunny day, we gathered at Vic Thomas Park then hopped a Valley Metro bus for our shuttle to the Bennington trailhead at the easternmost end of the Roanoke River Greenway. The 5.5-mile walk back to our cars

was interrupted for a lunch break at Fork in the Alley (about three blocks off the greenway), which was enjoyed by all. Though we shared the trail with bicycles, skateboards, human-powered scooters, dog walkers, joggers, baby strollers, and other walkers, it never seemed crowded. After our walk some took time to check out the newest section of the Roanoke River Greenway (not open at the time of this writing), which will extend westward from Memorial bridge.

**Sunday, September 11, 2011 8:00AM
Mount Rogers Headquarters to Groseclose**

Kris & Bob Peckman (leaders), Timo Grüneberg, Carina Hughes, John Merkwan, Fred Meyer, Cheryl Penn and her black hiker-dog Beasley

We arrived at the Mt. Rogers Headquarters around 10:00 and visited the Partnership shelter just behind the Visitor /Center. It was spectacular indeed, with a big loft, and even a shower! After the rangers patted Beasley, and after we realized that the gates would close at 4:30 and moved our cars across the street, we were on the trail about 10:30.

We had been led to believe this would be a "downward-trending" hike. That may be true overall, but we spent the first six miles mostly climbing, then after about three miles of descent, we crossed several small ridges before reaching Route 11. However, a light breeze and shade most of the way kept us comfortable.

I think what struck us the most about today's hike was the variety of vegetation zones. On top were fields of dried-out ferns, some bottle gentians in flower, and a small red mushroom like a tiny votive candle with a yellow wick. As we descended, there were more mushrooms: some small rounded wet orange ones, a ridgy one that looked like a moss-colored open paper cupcake wrapper, and then lots of white golf-ball mushrooms. We went through dry woods, then wet woods with small streams, small hemlocks, and rhododendron, an open wetland full of flowers including jewel weed and one spectacular orange flower that might have been yellow milkwort, and finally fields with blackberries and what John said were chokecherries. We all enjoyed the fruit, and John filled up a little bag with chokecherries to take home to Kathy.

Our most congenial group, including Beasley, stayed together all day, and we reached Route 11 by about 4:30.



Mt. Rogers HQ to GroseClose - photo by Cheryl & Carina

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.

You may drive your own car to the trailhead if you wish. However, carpooling is encouraged to save gasoline and because trailhead parking may be limited.

The hike leader is responsible for arranging such carpooling as may be required. While there is no fee to hike with the club, the indicated amount is to defray automobile expenses and should be given to the driver of your carpool.

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

The club is always looking for experienced hikers to help lead club hikes. If you know of someone that you think would be a good hike leader, or wish to nominate yourself, please contact Mike Vaughn at 540-992-1350 or email mikeva999@yahoo.com.

**Sunday, September 25, 2011 7:15AM
Three Ridges**

10 miles, Strenuous, \$5.50 carpool fee
68 miles from Roanoke

The hike will go from Reeds Gap to the Tye River, a distance of about 10 miles. This will be a joint hike with the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club.

John Miller 540-375-3250

**Sunday, September 25, 2011 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.

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

**Sunday, October 2, 2011 8:00AM
Wind Rock (Rt. 613) to Pine Swamp Shelter & return**

14.6 miles, Strenuous
\$7.00 carpool fee, 62 miles from Roanoke

We will start where the AT crosses Rt. 613 near Wind Rock and head west, passing by the Bailey Gap Shelter at 3.7 miles and then down 1,100 feet to Stony Creek Valley, reaching the Pine Swamp shelter at 6.8 miles and stop for lunch. Of course now we need to climb back up 1,100 feet to reach the top of Big Mountain and back to our start point. If desired it is just another 0.2 miles to the Wind Rock view point on Potts Mountain.

John Merkwan 540-904-2299

Carina Hughes 540-588-0433

**Sunday, October 2, 2011 1:00PM
Troutville (Rt 11) to Fullhardt Knob**

7.0 miles, Moderate, No carpool fee, In 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. We will return the same way.

Fred Walters 540-977-1430

Rushdat Hale..... 540-309-7263

.....rushdatkunlesanni@yahoo.com

**Saturday, October 8, 2011 11:00AM
Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail and Salem Highlights**

5.0 miles, Easy
\$.50 carpool fee, 3 miles from Salem

Starting at the Hanging Rock Battlefield Monument, we'll walk the Hanging Rock Trail into Salem then continue through neighborhoods, parks, cemeteries and college campuses to downtown Salem. Hike will end at a local pub where we'll have lunch (optional).

Mark McClain..... 355-6526

.....mcclain.salem@gmail.com

Diana Christopulos 387-0930

**Sunday, October 9, 2011 8:00AM
Tinker Cliffs**

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

Located in Botetourt County, the trailhead for this hike is on Route 779 roughly halfway between Catawba and Daleville. The hike crosses meadows and Catawba Creek and then starts the ascent to Scorched Earth Gap where it continues on the AT to Tinker Cliffs. Several spots along the cliffs offer excellent views of McAfee Knob and the Catawba Valley. We will be doing some additional hiking along the cliffs, which will add about two miles.

Fred Meyer 304-744-9219

.....wfmeyer@suddenlink.net

Rushdat Hale..... 540-309-7263

.....rushdatkunlesanni@yahoo.com

**Sunday, October 16, 2011 8:00AM
Work Hike**

Work hike location to be announced at a later date.

Dave Jones 540-552-3058

Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Sunday, October 16, 2011 11:00AM
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. 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.

Sue Scanlin 540-989-0497
 scanlin@verizon.net
Carina Hughes 540-588-0433

**Saturday, October 22, 2011 9:00AM
 Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee
 Knob**

7.6 miles, Moderate
 \$0.50 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 hike will be part of the events sponsored by Roanokeoutside.com. They are conducting a weekend festival called the Roanoke Outdoor Circus, which celebrates all the outdoor activities available in the Roanoke area.

Linda King 342-2411
 jennelleking@aol.com
Carina Hughes 540-588-0433

**Saturday, October 22, 2011 1:00PM
 Dragon's Tooth Parking to Dragon's Tooth**

5.2 miles, Moderate
 \$1.50 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

Located on Cove Mountain near the Craig and Roanoke County line, the hike to Dragon's Tooth ascends steep, rugged outcrops of quartzite which form the spine of Cove Mountain. A difficult hike, Dragon's Tooth summit offers magnificent views of nearby and distant peaks year-round. This hike will be part of the events sponsored by Roanokeoutside.com. They are conducting a weekend festival called the Roanoke Outdoor Circus, which celebrates all the outdoor activities available in the Roanoke area.

Mike Vaughn 540-992-1350
 mikeva999@yahoo.com
Rushdat Hale 540-309-7263
 rushdatkunlesanni@yahoo.com

**Wednesday, October 26, 2011 9:00AM
 Sprouts Run/Wilson Mountain Loop**

8.0 miles, Moderately strenuous,
 \$2.00 carpool fee, 23 miles from Roanoke

This hike will combine the Sprouts Run Trail and the Wilson Mountain Trail in a loop with a connection of a 0.9 mile Forest Service Road. Sprouts Run offers creek-side walking with some beautiful pools of water and cascading waterfalls. It also has some very large trees along the way. Wilson Mountain is mostly ridge walking with views of the James River and the Solitude Valley.

Larry Austin 540-254-2092
Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Sunday, October 30, 2011 1:00PM
 Sharp Top Mountain**

3.8 miles, Moderate
 \$3.00 carpool fee, 30 miles from Roanoke

We will be hiking to the top of Sharp Top, at the Peaks of Otter on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Bedford County. The first half of the hike is a steep ascent with many stone steps. There is a spectacular 360-degree view from the summit.

Dave Sutton 540-774-0648

**Sunday, November 6, 2011 8:00AM
 Salt Log Gap to Long Mountain Wayside**

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

Located in Amherst County some 20 miles northeast of Buena Vista, this hike offers some outstanding views. The trailhead is on the Appalachian Trail at Salt Log Gap roughly 8 miles from route 60 on a gravel road. Following the A.T. south, the route climbs Tar Jacket Ridge and then Cold Mountain. Both of these summits are open and offer extraordinary views in all directions – Cold Mountain especially. From Cold Mountain we will descend to Cow Camp Gap (during the stagecoach days there was an inn in this area, but nothing remains of it today). The trail then makes a short ascent before a long 2,500 foot descent to Long Mountain Wayside.

Mike Vaughn 540-992-1350
 mikeva999@yahoo.com

Sunday, November 6, 2011 1:00PM
Bottom Creek Gorge

5.3 miles, Moderate

\$2.00 carpool fee, 17 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 540-989-0497
 scanlin@verizon.net
Maya Bohler 540-344-6588
 mayabohler@cox.net

Saturday, November 12, 2011 11:00AM
Western Section, Roanoke River
Greenway

6.0 miles, Easy

No carpool fee, In Roanoke

We will walk the Roanoke River Greenway from Franklin Road (Ramada) to the western terminus and returning to Franklin. This (hopefully) will include the newest section of the Greenway (Memorial Ave. to Bridge St.) plus Smith/Wasena/Vic Thomas Park sections. Lunch en route at Village Grill on Grandin.

Mark McClain 355-6526
 mcclain.salem@gmail.com
Diana Christopulos 387-0930

Saturday, November 12, 2011 8:00AM
Work Hike

Work hike location to be announced at a later date.

Dave Jones 540-552-3058

Sunday, November 20, 2011 8:00AM
Lee Hollow (Rt. 621) - Trout Creek (Rt. 620)
113-Mile Hike # 7

9.2 miles, Strenuous

\$2.00 carpool fee, 24 miles from Roanoke

AT hike located in Craig and a little bit of Roanoke County, the hike on Brush Mt. includes the Audie Murphy Monument, a tribute to the most decorated soldier of WWII, who died in a plane crash on this very mountain. This hike has a mile of road walk added because the bridge may be out on Rt. 620.

John Miller 540-375-3250
 John.miller591@comcast.net

Sunday, November 20, 2011 1:00PM
Catawba Valley Trail - North Mountain &
back

6.0 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 12 miles from Roanoke

We will be hiking up the Catawba Valley Trail to the summit of North Mountain. There are limited views from the summit of the Catawba Valley and Craig County.

Fred Walters 540-977-1430
Rushdat Hale 540-309-7263
 rushdatkunlesanni@yahoo.com

Sunday, November 27, 2011 8:30AM
Floyd Mountain/Glenwood Horse Trail

11.0 miles, Strenuous

\$2.00 carpool fee, 22 miles from Roanoke

This hike will start on the Blue Blaze Trail (old AT) off of Middle Creek Road and proceed to the AT just north of the Bryant Ridge Shelter. We will then follow the AT north over Floyd Mountain to the Cornelius Creek Shelter. From there we will pick up the Glenwood Horse Trail and head south to its junction with Jennings Creek Road. This section of the horse trail is quite beautiful. This will require a short shuttle of about 15 minutes or so.

Larry Austin 540-254-2092
Maya Bohler 540-344-6588
 mayabohler@cox.net

**Saturday, December 3, 6:00PM Holiday
Potluck Dinner**

Christ Lutheran Church on the corner of Brandon Ave. and Grandin Rd.

The Club will provide beverages and table service. Club members will provide a dish to share.

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

Program: Dave Socky's slide show on his eight day backpacking trip in the Wind River Range of Wyoming and a video on Gannett Peak.

**Sunday, December 4, 2011 8:00AM
Andy Layne Trail to Daleville, 113 Mile
Hike #3**

11.2 miles, Strenuous

\$1.00 carpool fee, 8 miles from Roanoke

The hike is just north of Roanoke, starting in the Catawba Valley and ending in Daleville. The hike is a stiff uphill on the relocated Andy Layne Trail and then a scenic ridge walk overlooking Carvins Cove, before descending Tinker Mountain.

John Merkwan..... 540-904-2299

Karen Callahan..... 540-961-0640

**Sunday, December 4, 2011 1:00PM
Rocky Knob/Black Ridge/Grassy Knoll**

3.0 miles, Easy

\$6.00 carpool fee, 58 miles from Roanoke

This is a loop hike that starts at the Rocky Knob Visitor Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway at milepost 169. We will hike to Black Ridge, then to Grassy Knoll and back to Visitor Center.

Blanche and Merv Brower..... 540-387-9732

**Sunday, December 11, 2011 8:00AM
Work Hike**

Work hike location to be announced at a later date.

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

Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Sunday, December 11, 2011 11:00AM
Roanoke River Greenway (Salem)**

5.0 miles, Easy

No carpool fee, In Salem

We will walk the Roanoke River Greenway in Salem starting at Moyer Sports Complex (Eddy Ave. trailhead) to Rotary Park and return. We will also take time to explore the route of continuation of the greenway upstream from Eddy Ave. (may be under construction). Lunch en route at Shanghai Chinese buffet restaurant.

Mark McClain..... 540-355-6526

..... mcclain.salem@gmail.com

Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930

**Wednesday, December 14, 2011 8:30AM
Cove Mountain/Little Cove Mountain
Lollipop Loop**

12 miles, Strenuous

\$2.00 carpool fee, 22 miles from Roanoke

This hike will encompass the Cove Mountain Trail, a portion of the Buchanan Trail, a portion of the AT, the Glenwood Horse Trail and the Little Cove Mountain Trail with a return to the starting point on the Cove Mountain Trail. It will offer a variety of views of mountain peaks in just about every direction.

Larry Austin..... 540-254-2092

Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Sunday, December 18, 2011 1:00PM
Cascades National Scenic Trail**

4.0 miles, Easy

\$5.00 carpool fee, 54 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County near Pembroke, the hike uses trails which run along both sides of Little Stony Creek, which ends near the Cascades – an impressive waterfall. Usually the hike will go up one side of the creek and come back on the other. The Forest Service charges a nominal fee (\$3.00) to park at the trailhead.

Chuck Walz..... 540-774-3596

Sue Scanlin 540-989-0497

..... scanlin@verizon.net



**Konnarock Crew sitting on the job again.
Isn't their job, replacing the rock bridges, beautiful?**

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Application New & Renewal

If accepted for membership, I agree to:

1. Support the objectives of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
2. Abide by the rules of the National and State Parks and Forests
3. Respect the interests of the owner when on private property
4. Keep trails and woodlands free of litter and
5. Abide by instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Name(s) _____ | New Member Packet fee | \$5.00 _____ |
| Address _____ | Indiv. # of years _____ | x \$10.00 _____ |
| City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____ | Family # of years _____ | x \$15.00 _____ |
| Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ | OR | |
| Email _____ | Individual life membership | \$250.00 _____ |
| | Family life membership | \$300.00 _____ |
| Year you joined RATC (make a guess!) _____ | Donation | \$ _____ |
| Make checks payable to RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282 | Amount Enclosed | \$ _____ |

TRAIL BLAZER
Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
PO BOX 12282
ROANOKE VA 24024-2282



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ROANOKE, VA
PERMIT 509

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Mervin Brower
387-9732 mervin.brower@verizon.net
Vice President, Michael Vaughn
992-1350 mikeva999@yahoo.com
Secretary, Fred Walters
977-1430 n2422y@aol.com
Treasurer, Blanche Brower
387-9732 blanche.brower@verizon.net
Land Mgmt. Supervisor, Roger Holnback
556-2919 rhoInback@westernvirginalandtrust.org
Conservation Supervisor, Liz Belcher
384-6772 lbelcher@roanokecountyva.gov
Trail Supervisor, David Jones
540-552-3058 dhjones@together.net
Shelter Supervisors, Kenny Garrett & Jonathan Reed
293-7967 codenine911@hotmail.com
312-5865 ratc_shelter@yahoo.com
Hikemaster, Michael Vaughn
992-1350 mikeva999@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor, Bob Peckman
366-7780 bob@peckmanjazz.com
Membership Coordinator, Bob Blankenbaker
558-9752 lankyblanky@yahoo.com
Counselor, Sue Scanlin
989-0497 scanlin@verizon.net
Counselor, Dick Clark
989-7053 jandrclark@cox.net

ANCILLARIES

Social Chairman, Carolyn McPeak
540-890-2855 mcpeakcr@aol.com
Webmaster, David Perry
..... dperry@westernvirginalandtrust.org
Roanoke College Rep., Brian Chisom
389-7393 (H), 375-7393 (W) chisom@roanoke.edu
Mid-week Workhikes, Bill Gordge
774-3016 bgordge@cox.net

OTHER

Southwest & Central VA Regional Director, Laura Belleville
540-953-3571 lbelleville@appalachiantrail.org
ATC Regional Representative, Joe Parrish
540-953-3571 jparrish@appalachiantrail.org
Regional Partnership Committee Rep., Mervin Brower
387-9732 mervin.brower@verizon.net
Regional Partnership Committee Alternate, Roger Holnback
556-2919 rhoInback@westernvirginalandtrust.org
ATC-LT Coordinator - James River to New River and
Director Western Virginia Land Trust, Roger B. Holnback
556-2919 rhoInback@westernvirginalandtrust.org
ATC-LT Coord. New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
540-951-7580 srei38@hotmail.com
Roanoke Valley Greenways Liaison, Roger B. Holnback
556-2919 rhoInback@westernvirginalandtrust.org
Sir Speedy Printer
344-8550 info@sspeedy.net

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
and a member of The Nature Conservancy and the Western Virginia Land Trust