

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Summer 2012

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

**RATC 80th Anniversary
Summer Cornboil,
Saturday, August 4th, 6-9 PM
Greenhill Park**

**I-81 to exit 137, West on Main
Left on Diuguids, Right on Parkside**

Carol McPeak: 890-2855

WORK HIKES

**Saturday, July 28- 8:00 AM
Salt Pond Mountain**

**Saturday/Sunday, August 4 & 5 - 8:30AM
Dragon's Tooth**

**Saturday, September 22 - 8:00AM
Salt Pond Mountain**

Hike Scheduling

**Contact Adam Wood
302-528-9680 – adampaulwood@yahoo.com**

BOARD MEETINGS

**(All members are always welcome.
Please let the host know you plan to attend.)**

**Monday, July 23, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by Merv & Blanche Brower**

**Monday, September 17, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by John Miller**

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Paying Club Dues

Our dues are very low. So we are very frugal; it is a tradition. Instead of invoicing you for your dues, we just print the renewal form on the next-to-last page of every Blazer and print the year your dues expire after your name on the label.

Even some of our hardest working members forget. Please look at your label and pay in January. We use your money very carefully.

RATC OVERSEERS LIST, July 2012

- Section 1:** VA 611 to VA 608, Lick Skillet Hollow—Jonathan McGlumphy
- Section 2:** VA 608 to VA 606, Kimberling Creek (Brushy Mt)—Jerry Kyle
- Section 3:** VA 606 to Dismal Creek—Mike & Jennie Reilly
- Section 4:** Dismal Creek to N end of Ribble Trail, Big Horse Gap—Bill Floyd, Leslie Kay
- Section 5:** Big Horse Gap to Powerline—Matt Gentry, Neville Harris, Michael Lasecki
- Section 6:** Powerline to US 460 bridge, New River (Angel's Rest)—Dan Phlegar
- Section 7:** Pine Swamp Shelter to Bailey Gap Shelter (Stony Creek)—David & Lori Jones
- Section 8:** Bailey Gap Shelter to War Spur Trail (Salt Pond Mt.)—Duncan Hollar
- Section 9:** War Spur Trail to Rocky Gap (John's Creek)—Bob Stimson
- Section 10:** Rocky Gap to VA 630, Sinking Creek (Kelly's Knob)—Joe & Brian Kelley
- Section 11:** Sinking Creek to Niday Trail (Sinking Creek Mt.)—Chase Davidson, Linda King
- Section 12:** Niday Trail to VA 621 (Sinking Creek Mt.)—*Vacant*
- Section 13:** VA 621 to Audie Murphy Monument (Brush Mt)—Mervin & Blanche Brower
- Section 14:** Audie Murphy Monument to VA 602 (Brush Mt.)—Lois Coche-Smith & Jen Schaeffer
- Section 15:** VA 620 to "Secret Trail" (Cove Mt)—Shannon Palmer & Dale Sirry
- Section 16:** "Secret Trail" to VA 624 (Dragon's Tooth)—Bob & Kris Peckman
- Section 17:** VA 624 to VA 311(Sawtooth Ridge)—Maurice Turner
- Section 18:** VA 311 to Campbell Shelter (McAfee Knob)—Frank Haranzo, Dallas St.Clair
- Section 19:** Campbell Shelter to Brickey's Gap—Bruce Davidson
- Section 20:** Brickey's Gap to Ditch Trail (Tinker Cliffs)—Homer & Therese Witcher
- Section 21:** Ditch Trail to Angel's Gap (Tinker Ridge)—Dick Clark
- Section 22:** Angel's Gap to US 220, Daleville (Tinker Ridge)—Vince Mier
- Section 23:** US 220 to VA 652—Homer & Therese Witcher
- Section 24:** VA 652 to Salt Pond Road (Fullhardt Knob)—Mike Vaughn, Fred Walters
- Section 25:** Salt Pond Road to Blackhorse Gap (Wilson Creek)—Gary Bible, Larry Austin
- Andy Layne Trail**—RATC

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

Scott & Martha Anderson

Amy & Tim Bradley

Guy Brooks & Family

Vivian Camacho

Trish Deel

Dan Dennison

Gregory Edwards

Penny & Michael Felts

Aaron Hall

Daniel Harrison

Michael Long

Cynthia & Frank Munley

James Narramore

Graham Pratt

Bill Reich

Joanna Swanson

Lois & Michael Traver

Marlyse Whitaker

And we thank you for making donations:

Vivian Camacho

Rita Krasnow

Alan G. & Billie Ruth Wonders gave in honor of *Therese & Homer Witcher*.

Robert E. Rich

Suzanne Thorniley,

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

Bob Blankenbaker

President's Report

I am very excited to be the club president this year. Since relocating to Roanoke in 1995 my wife and I have grown to love the area, with its abundance of year-round outdoor activities to choose from. I'm doubly excited to say that I will be retiring from my day job on July 1, so I'll get to enjoy the area a great deal more. One big project the RATC board and I are going to tackle is updating the club's management plan. It was last updated in 1991, so it is overdue for an update. If you are interested in participating in the project let me know.

Our club will be celebrating its 80th anniversary this year. The RATC was founded in November 1932. We will be commemorating this event later this year. Speaking of anniversaries, on August 11-12 the Appalachian Trail Conservancy will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of the completion of the entire AT. The event will be held in Harpers Ferry. You can find out more about it on their web site: www.appalachiantrail.org/.

The Konnarock crew will be working on our section of trail this summer. From June 7-11 they will be working on rehabbing the trail near McAfee Knob and from August 2-8 they will be back to work on the trail up to Dragon's Tooth. Club members are welcome to come out and work with the crew. For those that don't know about the Konnarock crew, they are a group of volunteers from all over the country who each come in for a week or more to work on the trail. The ATC coordinates the work of the crew. There are several different crews that work along the whole length of the AT. The Konnarock crew works with clubs on the southern section of the trail.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at club hikes or social events over the coming year. I encourage all our members, particularly our newer members, to come out on our hikes or participate in our social events. Please contact me if you have any suggestions or ideas on ways to make our club better.

Mike Vaughn

Hikemaster's Report

Living the dream. It should be a goal for all. However, it is not always possible. I feel particularly blessed to have been given the opportunity to relocate to Roanoke. Having grown up in the area, I was well aware of the wealth of recreational opportunities nearby. After living in Piedmont regions for the past ten years, the decision to move back was easy for me. I knew there were mountains and trails everywhere!

Returning to the mountains got me involved with the RATC and thus the hikemaster position. I concluded that it was an appropriate way for someone who has spent countless weekends of life on trails to give back to the nature community. When Mike Vaughn announced that he was looking for someone to take over as hikemaster, I decided this was my calling. I am very excited about the position and thank the club for providing me the opportunity to serve in this role.

Speaking of volunteering, we should all take the time to thank the wonderful hike leaders of the RATC. These folks dedicate a lot of time guiding hikes for other club members. Without the hike leaders this club would not be a success, and it would make my job extremely challenging. Please remember to tell your hike leaders how much you appreciate their contributions.

.....Now for the hiking! The Summer schedule has a number of exciting hikes, including work hikes and backpacking trips. There are also a number of unique initiatives. The Girl Scout hikes with Barbara Duerk will continue and are open to all members, and the club will celebrate the AT Family Hike Day with an outing. A brand new program called the 7 Summits will be rolled out this quarter and will extend through the Fall hike schedule. This is a program led by Roanoke City in partnership with the RATC. It focuses on attaining the summits of seven well known peaks in the Roanoke region. There will be an entry fee required, but it will be a good way to support hiking in the Roanoke Valley. The RATC plans to offer one guided hike for each summit. Look for an e-mail with more information as the start date draws closer. Finally, we have many weekday evening hikes that various hike leaders have scheduled. These provide a good opportunity for a shorter hike to help you ease out of the workday and are good for those who have weekend obligations.

... On another note, I want to stress the importance of communicating with the hike leaders prior to attending hikes. The club makes an effort to provide the hike leader's phone number and e-mail address (when available) through multiple media to facilitate communication between club members and hike leaders. It is critical that you make an effort to talk to your hike leader prior to the hike to (a) ensure that you have the proper gear for the hike; (b) ensure you are at the right ability level to complete the hike without endangering yourself or interfering with others' enjoyment of the hike; (c) ascertain that there is still space available on the hike, which is an issue for hikes in wilderness areas; and (d) provide a common courtesy to the hike leaders. Please note that some hikes, especially the backpacking trips, have response dates by which you must commit to the trip.

One change you will note in the hike listings is that any group size limitations are now noted. These limitations are primarily the result of wilderness restrictions but could also result from the challenge of coordinating a large backpacking trip. Restrictions are also mentioned in the weekly hikemaster e-mails. In the case of wilderness restrictions, it is important that we respect the Forest Service's group size limitations to maintain the club's good reputation.

Finally, if anyone is interested in becoming a hike leader for the club, please call me or send me an e-mail. My contact information is on the front of the Blazer. I will be happy to discuss responsibilities with you and help you determine if it might be a good fit. Also, please contact me if you are not receiving the weekly hikemaster e-mails and we will add you to the distribution list.

So, about living that dream. How do you do it? Well, you can start by trying to get out more regularly on the RATC hikes. The club tries to offer at least one hike each week as well as hikes for all ability levels, so there are myriad opportunities. We live in such a beautiful area, so get out and take advantage of it. Will I see you on the trails?

Adam Wood

Wilderness Sawyers

Duncan Hollar, Shannon Palmer, Mervin Brower, Liz Belcher, and Blanche Brower attended a 2-day crosscut certification course at Konnarock Camp

at Sugar Grove on April 28-29.

Just as chainsaw operators must be certified by the Forest

Service to run saws on the AT, so must crosscut saw operators be trained. In wilderness

areas, chainsaws may not be used; thus we revert to crosscut

saws. These saws were made from 1880-1930, so the tools themselves are antiques that require

special care. The course involved safety training, use of an ax for limbing, care of the tools, bucking and felling with the crosscut saw. The same skills

needed for chainsaw operation are needed, such as assessing the bind, reading the lean of the tree and planning escape routes. With crosscut, only conventional cuts are used. All the RATC attendees were certified at some level, with Shannon Palmer achieving the highest rating in the class: felling up to 16". Congratulations to our



Duncan, Shannon,

Merv, Liz, and Blanche

newest lumber jacks!

Liz Belcher

Hike Reports

Saturday, March 10, 2012 11:00AM Roanoke River Greenway (Roanoke)

Mark McClain & Diana Christopoulos (leaders), Patricia Webb, Nancy Friedman, Paul Blaiklock, Don & Carol Strum, Victor Fischer, Linda Stowell, Rudy & Karen Vietmeier, Judy Kriskern, Joanne Derryberry, Rhinda North, Linda Harrison, Conrad & Bee Grundlehner, Laurie Spangler, Paula Kirtley (& her 2 grandsons).

A cool, sunny and calm day proved ideal for a walk on the Roanoke River Greenway. Starting at Piedmont Park we walked to the western terminus of the trail at Vic Thomas Park. We then gathered for a lunch at the dependably good Village Grill on Memorial Ave. Returning to the trail we detoured to inspect the new construction in Ghent Park, a trail that will connect Memorial Bridge to the soon-to-be-opened section of the Roanoke River Greenway. that will extend the trail to Bridge Street and Norwich neighborhood. We also got a close look at the new hike/bike bridge over the Roanoke River.

By the time this report is published, this section should be open. We then returned to our starting place, logging a total of 8 miles.

Sunday, March 11, 2012 5:30AM Sunrise Hike to McAfee Knob

Linda King & Maya Bohler (coleaders), Ivy Lidstone, HR Blankenship, Carl Cornett, Sheila & Mike Vaughn, Carol McPeak & Dru Sexton

We met at the trailhead parking lot before dawn and hiked in the dark, looking like a giant glow worm with our headlamps and flashlights shining as we climbed to the top. As we reached the Knob, the sun began its glorious ascent. Quite a view from the Knob at any time, but at sunrise it is extra special.

We had coffee and muffins at the top for a hike-breakfast treat. The hot coffee was most welcome on this chilly morning hike.

**Sunday, March 18, 2012 8:00AM
A.T., Petites Gap to James River**

John Miller (leader), Carina Hughes, Anne Hanna, Bill Reich, Sheila Vaughn and Mike Vaughn

The temperatures stayed in the 60's during the entire hike except for some 50's at the higher elevations. Perfect conditions for this strenuous hike. Mike waited for a person that was going to meet us at the trail head but he didn't show up after a half an hour so Mike moved quickly to meet up with the group. He did so about two and a half miles into the hike. About that time we met up with Larry Austin, Lois Smith and Paul Jones who were doing a loop hike in the area. We took a lunch break at one of the many camping areas on top of the mountain and then began the descent to the river. During that part of the hike we met Chase Davidson who was hiking South from Front Royal on a section hike to Pearisburg. The hike leader predicted we would not see people jumping into the river from the foot bridge piling as we did in the summer. The prediction turned out to be wrong. As we were coming to the end of the bridge, three young men took what must have been the first dives of the season. All agreed it was a good hike and a near perfect day for mid-March.

**Sunday, March 18, 2012 1:00PM
Daleville (Rt 220) to Hay Rock**

No one showed up in the rain.

**Saturday, March 24, 2012 8:00AM
Pine Swamp to Route 635 Work Hike**

Liz Belcher, Timo Grueneberg, David Jones, Ron Sloan, Hunter Wiley

Weather forecasts are important in planning work hikes. Whereas on a recreational hike if the skies cloud over and rain falls, we pull on our rain gear and carry on till we reach our destination, which is usually the car. But on a work hike, rain's only helpful attribute is to let you see how well the trail drains water. As for the work, it turns dirt to mud, it fills gloves with water and it generally rusts hand tools and penetrates the heart, the motor, of our beloved chainsaws and weed eaters. Rain gear or not, rain does not make for any type of positive experience on a work hike.

So for a probably of precipitation of 90% or one for

20% the planning is straight forward, no go for the former, go for the later. What about 60%? 70%? Who knows? On Saturday, April 24th the weather forecast was in the grey area and the decision was made to go to work.

This hike was for minor tread repair and light underbrush cutting between Pine Swamp Shelter and the Big Stony Creek bridge. Arriving at the Pine Swamp Shelter blue blaze access trail light rain was falling. Homer and Therese Witcher, the new RATC Shelter Supervisors, were also here with plans to move the Pine Swamp Shelter privy.

Tools were divvied up and our group split into three groups: one would help Homer and Therese. The second would start at the Big Stony bridge working south, and the last would start here and work north till the latter two groups met.

The rain increased to moderate. Moving along the trail one had to ask why we were out there and a new revised decision criteria for probability of precipitation was devised—any chance of rain, stay home.

Moving along the trail the only work that could be done was small blowdown removal and lopping. The moderate rain kept falling and work gloves filled with water.

Just about the time a decision to quit was about to happen, the sun came out. So, the decision criteria for probability of precipitation was further revised such that, sure, it was okay to keep the work hike scheduled even if there is a 70% chance of rain.

Lunch was eaten while enjoying the sun, and soaked raingear began to dry while hanging from branches situated in that same sunshine. What a great day.

The work continued. The second group was not met. They must have returned to the cars when the rain did not abate—"Oh ye of little faith."

Nearing Stony Creek and the road, distant thunder started to rumble. At the road the sky started to darken and the gay, warm sunshine of midday was gone. This was really no problem because it was only a quick mile road walk back to the cars. About

two hundred yards into this walk a break was called to pull rain gear back out of day packs. Light rain fell for a moment, quickly giving into heavy rain, lots of lightning and loud thunder. Before the worst of the storm limited like conversation, Hunter Wiley, a new member attending his first work hike, stated that his former home in Florida was the lightning capital of the country, or was it the lightning strikes human capital of the country? No time to ponder such trivialities.

The march was on and the weather was a formidable foe. The rain's intensity increased so much it seemed to be almost solid...It was solid. The ground started to turn white as hail began to accumulate! Hail is not very common here during the thunderstorm days of summer, and hail in March is unheard of.

About midway to the cars the Whistle Stop picnic area came into view and a suggestion was made to go there and sit out the storm under the picnic shelter, but of course, we were already wet so we could continue to the cars. That suggestion was rejected and the hike immediately deviated to the picnic shelter. But in the picnic ground there was no shelter. There was a small train for kids to play on and in. Eying the small, low opening to the cab of the engine, an aching back did not allow that low play train as a rain shelter. The rain and hail continued and the ground looked almost like winter.

That is when a children's play house was spotted. But, the front door was just as low and small as the train. One would have to crawl to get in. Who ever heard of a picnic ground without a shelter? Frustration. Wet. Cold. It is hailing and there is about an inch to two inches of hail on the ground! And there is no shelter in this picnic ground!

That is when it was noted that the children's play house had a side door that must have been put in so the big people could access the inside. And, so crouching way over, the two hikers entered nirvana—shelter from the storm. Though not tall enough to stand up in the play house was dry.

The storm passed and the hike continued. The road was covered with the icy hail. This weather phenomenon was just unbelievable.

Reaching the cars it was noted that no one had yet to leave, however no one was in the parking lot. As wet clothes were changed to dry, voices started to be heard, and soon people could be seen coming from the Pine Swamp shelter.

In asking how things went there, the response was essentially, "No problem." Therese had brought a big tarp and instead of stopping the work of digging a privy hole when the rain came, this group rigged the tarp to cover the hole and the work continued.

So, what was learned on this work hike? The answer is given by the April work hike report listed below.

**Saturday, March 24, 2012 11:00AM
Carvin's Cove Trails**

Cancelled for rain.

**Sunday, April 1, 2012 8:00AM
Mountain Lake Trails**

Chris Wilson (leader), Maya Bohler (assistant), Carina Hughes, Karen Callahan, and Fred Meyer



Karen, Maya, Fred & Carina - by Chris Wilson

Today was the perfect day for a hike. Mild temperatures with just a bit of chill in the air but fully sunny skies made for perfect conditions. The hike began near Mountain Lake and the whole group marveled at how low the water levels were. It

processed up the steep incline to Bald Knob which offered spectacular views of the New River Valley. From Bald Knob we traveled back in time on the Homestead Trail which is an old Civil War era road with several remnants of homesteads along the way. We proceeded on for lunch atop Bear Cliffs which offers a wonderful dining view of Blacksburg and Roanoke. The 8-mile hike ended on the fitness trail, and because of the amazing hikers that were along for the hike we stopped and did some exercises including pull ups and several other activities we'd never heard of before. Thanks to excellently illustrated signs to let us know what to do!

Sunday, April 8, 2012 8:00AM
Falling Water Cascades to Visitor Center

Larry Austin (leader), Lois Smith, Jen Schaeffer, Kris Peckman, Maya Bohler, Ivy Lidstone, John Merkwon and Maurice Turner

The weather starting out was somewhat overcast and cool but clearing skies a little later made for a beautiful day for hiking. Immediately starting out from the Falling Water Cascades parking lot, we encountered different wildflowers including Trillium, large Bellwort, Great Chickweed, Lousewort, Yellow Violets, Blue Violets, Toothwort and Wild Ginger. As we approached the headwaters of Jennings Creek near where the Glenwood Horse Trail crosses, we ran into hundreds of False Hellebore surrounding the stream. Here the stream branches out among trees displaying moss around their roots which were mostly above ground as water ran beneath them. It was quite an amazing sight. We reached the horse trail and began a slow descent to Jennings Creek Road. Along the way we were surprised to find Spiderworts blooming in different colors. We also saw Firepinks, Cancer Root (Squaw Root) and Wild Azalea (Pinksters) along the grassy road leading to Jennings Creek. After a brief break at Jennings Creek Road, we began our ascent up Little Harkening Hill via a gated Forest Service Road (doubling as the Horse Trail). When the road ended, we continued on via the Horse Trail to another Forest Service Road and began another ascent toward Harkening Hill. Along the way we saw many more wildflowers of the same species previously mentioned. We crossed through a couple of open fields made many years ago by the Forest Service and were then facing the slopes of

Harkening Hill which we had to ascend via a bushwhack. At the end of the second slope we were delighted to find a blanket of plants coming up which Jen then identified as Ramps. Of course, we had to pull just a few for later use at home. Also in the same little saddle of this slope were a mass of Bluebells and Dutchman Breeches. It was quite a steep, strenuous climb to reach the top of Harkening Hill and the trail leading down to the Visitors Centers at the Peaks of Otter. All made it without incident. We reached the Visitors Center a little before 3:00 p.m. and its amphitheater where we enjoyed some much earned refreshments.

Sunday, April 15, 2012 1:00PM
Belfast Trail to the Devil's Marblyard

Mervin Brower (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant), Trish Deel

The hike started from Daleville commuter parking lot. The day was clear and sunny with a temperature in the 80's and with high humidity. The parking lot at the site was full and a lot of cars were parked on the road. There were a lot of hikers on the trail and it seemed to be very popular with people from Lynchburg. Trish needed to stop for a while as she was getting too hot when we reached the bottom of the Marblyard. So Blanche and I went to the top. We met her halfway down where she was talking to a young man from Liberty University. We then all walked out together.

Sunday, April 22, 2012 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike

Rained out.

Sunday, April 22, 2012 1:00PM
Flat Top Mountain

Rained out.

Wednesday, April 25, 2012 8:00AM
Petites Gap to Sunset Field
via AT and Horse Trail

Cancelled.

**Sunday, April 29, 2012 8:00AM
North Mountain Trail**

Don Hoke (Leader), Fred Meyer (Assistant), Bill Reich, Ivy Lidstone, Paula Dudley from Cleveland, and Sarah Dodge from Minnesota

Under overcast skies we started hiking from the

Andy Layne parking lot at 9am. By the time we reached the top of North Mtn the sun had come out and with a nice breeze it turned into a perfect day for a long hike. The trees haven't quite leafed out all of the way on the ridgeline so there were some views thru the

trees as we went up and down the 44 bumps along the way. Ivy was on point all day as Fred and I brought up the rear. Bill, Paula and Sarah were somewhere in the middle as we all pretty much hiked our own hike, but we did regroup a few times along the way. The trails have all been reblazed with plastic colored blazing nailed to the trees and all of the old signs have been replaced with plastic laminated signs that should hold up well over time. What's missing is the mileage from the intersection of The Valley Way trail and The North Mtn Trail, to Rt 311. I believe the old sign, when it was readable, said 10 miles. And if that was true, I believe our total distance was 12.5 miles. We came across one mountain biker twice. The last time, close to Rt 311, he said he had ridden for 19 miles at that point. We arrived at the Dragon's Tooth parking lot at 3pm. A game warden was in the parking lot getting ready to put a note on someone's

car to remind them not to leave their pocket book in plain view. We only saw a deer and some squirrels on the shuttle between the start and finish points. No animals were seen during the hike. We saw a few Rhododendrons in full bloom along with quite a few different wild flowers.



Bill, Fred, Ivy, Paula, Sarah and Don

Thanks to Bill for getting us all back to the Andy Layne parking lot safely at the end. Thanks to Sarah for the extra water that she carried. And to Paula for being a champ in finishing without any complaining even with one of her knees hurting towards the end.

**Saturday, May 5, 2012 11:00AM
Green Hill Park Trails**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders), Conrad & Bee Grundlehner, Paul Blaiklock

The threat of thunderstorms scared away some of our hikers, but an intermittent drizzle was all that arrived, and it dampened our gear only slightly and our spirits not at all. We walked the length of the Roanoke River Greenway running along the river, then traversed the ridge via several natural trails. It's possible to do a loop hike of about five miles on the trails of Green Hill Park. We had hoped to see some spring wildflowers, but most were long gone this year, leaving only the lush foliage. We skirted the open fields where dozens of youth soccer games were underway, then adjourned for lunch to Mamma Maria's in Salem.

**Sunday, May 6, 2012 8:00AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Dragon's Tooth
Parking 113-Mile Hike # 5**

Carina Hughes (leader), Maya Bohler (assistant),
HR Blankenship, Anne Hanna & Sheila Vaughn

This was a terrific hike from beginning to end. The group was delightful. We learned a great deal from Anne and Maya about flowers, birds, backpacking gear and healthy trail recipes. Sheila asked every possible question she could and wondered why she was so hungry before lunchtime. Even though it was a little humid, the temperature for most of the day was in the 60s. We enjoyed the morning freshness and just the right amount of fog between the ridges. All of us agreed we have never seen so many thru hikers. We counted 19 total, one of those was headed Southbound as he had started in late February at the NJ/PA border. Next year, he plans to start at the same place (Delaware Pass) and end up in Maine at the Northern terminus. We also saw day hikers of all ages enjoying this fabulous walk in the woods. Even though we expected to see the beautiful yellow buttercups in the meadows, it took us by surprise to be in the midst of the pink rhododendrons in full bloom! Wow! They were breathtaking! Anne showed us the Fairy Wand or Devil's Bit and taught us the difference between male and female. She also pointed out wild pink orchids and many other species. It was one of our favorite days on the AT!

**Sunday, May 13, 2012 8:00AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee Knob**

Carina Hughes (leader), Mike Vaughn (assistant),
Sheila Vaughn, Karen Callahan and Lois Smith

After the excitement last week of meeting so many thru hikers, Sheila and Mike Vaughn decided they would become Trail Angels and brought individually wrapped fried chicken to distribute to these adventurous souls. Mothers' Day morning was sunny and cool, perfect for a hike up to McAfee Knob. On our way we saw a lonely snail trekking its way across the trail. Just a few minutes after we arrived at the top, we met "Dame Quixote" a fit silver-haired Chicago thru hiker, who was the first beneficiary of the Vaughn's trail magic. Sheila couldn't stop giving her chicken (she is now known by the Trail community as "Chicken Lady") and Mike gave her snacks for later. She told us that even though she is hiking solo, she is never alone.

To Ms. Quixote, it seems like they all end up together and look out for one another. She also told us that her sister thinks she is crazy and recently sent her a small package with marbles in it and a note saying, "I thought you might have lost these!"

We arrived at the parking lot before 1pm and Sheila took out a small table and laid out more chicken. "Cow Tail" from Rhode Island ate to his heart's content while Mike took another thru hiker to The Homeplace. We thoroughly enjoyed our conversations with these inspirational people and are thankful that Lois and Karen were able to join us on this special day.

**Sunday, May 13, 2012 1:00PM
A.T., Black Horse Gap to Curry Gap, 113 Mile
Hike #1**

Mervin (leader) & Blanche Brower

The day was Mother's Day and no one wanted to take mother on a hike. So we had no one show up. So Blanche and I went for a hike on the Tinker Creek Greenway and over to the Roanoke River Greenway. It was a pleasant cloudy day good for hiking.

**Sunday May 20, 2012 8:00AM
Hoop Hole, Upper Loop**

Kris and Bob Peckman (leaders), Anne Hanna,
Carina Hughes, Bill Reich, Mike and Sheila
Vaughn

On a beautiful, sunny Sunday with temperatures in the 70s, seven RATC hikers started up the Hoop Hole trail in a clockwise direction around both loops (next time, we'll try it as a Figure 8). Galax was in bloom all around us, as were mountain laurel. We also saw bluets and squawroot on the lower loop, and one bowman's root on the upper loop. The creeks were up, and a few feet got wet, but there were enough dry socks to go around. Going counter-clockwise on the lower loop might save a few wet feet to nearer the end of the hike. On the upper loop, the hike goes through an awesome display of stinging nettles, very memorable to anyone wearing shorts.

At the place where you can take off bushwhacking up a rib to Montgomery Knob, Mike and Sheila, having another commitment later in the day, continued on the trail. The rest of us headed up the

rib and scrambled up the cliff to the Knob, where we were rewarded with a nice view toward Eagle Rock, though it was somewhat more obscured by vegetation than I remembered. After lunch we reversed the scramble and headed down the trail. We never knew quite how far we hiked: the Blazer said 8 miles, the map in the hike leader's packet said 10 miles, the signboard at the parking lot said 9 miles, and Mike's GPS clocked it at 7.75 miles.

**Wednesday, May 23, 2012 8:00AM
Harvey's Knob to Jennings Creek**

Larry Austin (leader), Bob & Kris Peckman, Fred Meyer, Sally Evans, Todd Mental and Cynthia Munley.

Seven hikers showed up for this mid-week hike which followed the AT from Harvey's Knob to the

junction with the Little Cove Mountain Trail with a 2.8 mile descent of the Little Cove Mountain Trail to its end at Jennings Creek Road. The weather was overcast and dark at times but a good day for hiking. Two newcomers to the club joined us-- Todd Mental and Cynthia Munley. We welcome them to our club and hopefully future hikes. The flowers had mostly disappeared due to the early Spring but we did see a few. The Mountain Laurel were quite beautiful along the trail from Bearwallow Gap to the top of Cove Mountain. We had a brief rain shower near Bearwallow Gap but survived it rather well. We met several section hikers heading south and a couple of thru-hikers during our lunch break at the top of Cove Mountain. Since the trail was somewhat level most of the way, we set a good pace and finished up around 2:00 p.m.

**Saturday, May 26, 2012 8:00AM
Salt Pond Mountain Work Hike**

Replaced by the April 22 rained-out work hike.

**Sunday, April 22-May 26, 2012 8:30AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

Mervin and Blanche Brower, Bruce Davidson, Timo Grüneberg (reporter), Brian Kelly, and Adam Wood

Dedication vs. high temperature...

... or so could be the headline for this work hike. Formerly scheduled for April (cancelled due to rain) we went to Catawba Mountain this month to reroute a short section of trail which was badly eroded.

Early in the morning, with temperatures already in the high 70's, that might be the reason that for the first time this year we had a single digit number crew, but full of motivation and with lots of water we met at the

parking lot at 311. To be at the work site on time and have all the tools we needed, we shuttled up the fire road. Quickly evaluating the final layout, pin-flagging the final route and the fire rakes and pulaskis were swinging fast, as well as the sweat. But with a dedicated crew you could quickly see the rough structure of the route. With the nice weather McAfee's Knob once again lived up to its name of one of the most frequented sections of the AT.

Besides being on his first work hike and being the hike master Adam Wood did a great job of detouring and explaining the ongoing project to the upcoming thru-hikers and weekend-warriors. Around noon the new route was in place and we all were ready for some re-energizing, because the biggest project of the day was still on the list.



Timo, Adam, Bruce, and Brian - by Blanche Brower

First task after the lunch break with combined forces was the move of a ten-foot bridge about 5 yards up the mountain to the new trail location. Not even this task could slow us down today and so

some of us installed the new bridge footing while the rest started brushing in the eroded section. Blanche did some fine tuning to the new trail section and gave her approval. By mid-afternoon we were able to “open” the reroute and were proud of the day’s achievements.

**Saturday, June 9, 2012 8:00AM
Roanoke River Greenway
(Roanoke west section)**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders)
Maya Bohler, Pat Cousins, Joanne Derryberry,
Lynne Edwards

We started at the westernmost end of the Roanoke River Greenway, at Bridge St. in the Norwich community. While plans call for a formal trailhead and parking area here in the future, for the present users arriving by car must park along either side of Bridge St. about a half-block south of the

inauspicious gate that leads to the paved greenway trail. Early morning cool air was short-lived as the hot sun prevailed on this cloudless morning. We walked the newest section of the greenway which includes two magnificent bicycle/pedestrian bridges across the Roanoke River. This section adds about 1.3 miles to the Roanoke River Greenway, counting the trail through Ghent Hill Park and the trek across Memorial Ave. bridge. We continued through the three city parks that are connected by the greenway, Vic Thomas, Wasena (where wildflower restoration area is glorious), and Smith. Arriving at River's Edge Sports Complex we traversed a soccer field then headed up Crystal Spring for a delicious breakfast at Famous Anthony's. Full bellies and hot sun made for a slower pace returning to our starting point.

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 Adam Wood at 302-528-9680 or email adampaulwood@yahoo.com.

Sunday, July 1, 2012 8:00AM
House Mountains, Big and Little

9.1 miles, Strenuous
 \$4.50 carpool fee, 48 miles from Roanoke

Located in Rockbridge County west of Lexington. Purchased for preservation by the Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) in 1989, the 800+ acres including the tops of Big House and Little House Mountain, and the saddle between them, contain numerous species of plants and provide views of the Rockbridge County countryside. We will follow the 2-mile woods road to the saddle, hike another mile to the cliffs of Big House Mountain, then return to the saddle and take the Little House Mountain trail which involves a climb followed by a lovely ridge walk.

Adam Wood 302-528-9680
adampaulwood@yahoo.com

Saturday, July 7, 2012 8:00AM
Smith Mountain Lake State Park Trails

11 miles, Moderate
 \$3.75 carpool fee, 36 miles from Roanoke

We will do a loop hike involving the Turtle Island trail which goes out into the lake as well as the Walton Creek, Osprey Point, Striper Cove, Opossum Trot, and a few others. **There is a \$3-\$4 fee for parking.**

Fred Meyer 304-744-9219
wfmeyer@suddenlink.net

Sunday, July 8, 2012 8:00AM
Peaks of Otter Trails

11.4 miles, Strenuous
 \$2.75 carpool fee, 27 miles from Roanoke

We will hike the Sharp Top, Harkening Hill, and Flat Top trails. Harkening Hill: We will be passing Balance Rock along the way. There are limited views from the summit of Harkening Hill. Flat Top: At one point a side trail descends a short distance to an unusual formation known as Cross Rock. At the summit of Flat Top nice views may be obtained by easy scrambles onto projecting rocks. Sharp Top: The first half of hike is a steep ascent with many stone steps. There is a spectacular 360 degree view from the summit.

Fred Meyer 304-744-9219
wfmeyer@suddenlink.net

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:30PM
Cascades National Scenic Trail

4 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. This is an after-work hike.

Please be sure to bring a flashlight or headlamp, although we should have plenty of time to be back to our cars by dark.

Chris & Edward Wilson..... 202-3331
theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Saturday, July 14, 2012 8:00AM
Tinker Creek & Roanoke River Greenways

5 miles, Easy
 No carpool fee, In Roanoke

Starting at the Bennington St. trailhead on the Roanoke River Greenway, we'll walk the NEW connector trail and bridge over the Roanoke River, then follow the Tinker Creek Greenway to Fallon Park, stop for breakfast at a Vinton eatery, then return to our starting place. Easy, paved trail with one steep hill.

Mark McClain..... 540-355-6525
mcclain.salem@gmail.com
Diana Christopulos 540-387-0930

Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:00AM
High Meadows / Seneca Creek

13.5 miles, Strenuous
 \$15.00 carpool fee, 150 miles from Roanoke

Seneca Rocks is a premier hiking destination in West Virginia. This hike will hit all the highlights including spectacular views from two open pastures on Spruce Mountain and toward the end highlighting Seneca Falls, the perfect spot for a swim.

Hike is limited to a group size of 12 people.
Chris & Edward Wilson..... 757-202-3331
theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Saturday, July 21, 2012 8:00AM
Bluff City to Rice Field

12.7 miles, Strenuous

\$6.00 carpool fee, 60 miles from Roanoke

The hike is on Peters Mountain in Giles County near Pearisburg, SR 460 & The New River. It goes up Peters Mountain to the Rice Fields Shelter and returns. There are great views in the open area of Rice Fields on top of the mountain.

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

Sunday, July 22, 2012 8:00AM
Carvins Cove Trails

11 miles, Strenuous

\$0.50 carpool fee, 6 miles from Roanoke

The new Four Gorge Extension trail will be included in a loop with Hi-Dee-Ho, Brushy Mountain, Hemlock Tunnel, Araminta, Kerncliff, and the Four Gorge trail.

John Merkwán 540-904-2299
 merkwánjk@cox.net

Wednesday, July 25, 2012 5:00PM
Fort Lewis Mountain

4.2 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

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

Adam Wood 302-528-9680
 adampaulwood@yahoo.com

Saturday, July 28, 2012 8:00AM
Salt Pond Mountain Work Hike

0 miles, Moderate

\$6.00 carpool fee, 58 miles from Roanoke

We will be working on relocating a worn-out section of the A.T. near the War Spur Trail in the Mountain Lake Wilderness area in Giles County. Forest Service approval for the relocation is pending. If the approval is not obtained by the date of the work hike, another work hike will be substituted.

David Jones 540-552-3058
 dhjones@together.net

Saturday, July 28, 2012 10:00AM
113 Mile Hike #6 - Trout Creek (RT 620) to Dragon's Tooth Parking

7 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 11 miles from Roanoke

This is a joint hike with the Girl Scouts. The hike is in Craig and Roanoke County west of Salem. After crossing Trout Creek, it ascends steeply through a fire recovery area, passing by the Pickle Branch Shelter at 1.0 mile. It then continues ascent to the ridge, and then goes around the crescent-shaped top of Cove Mountain to the blue blazed trail to Dragon's Tooth on right. There are great views and rock-scrambling opportunities on Dragon's Tooth. The trail descends on the A.T. to Lost Spectacles Gap, where a blue-blazed trail on left leads down to the Dragon's Tooth parking lot.

Barbara Duerk 540-343-1616
 barbgary@cox.net

Sunday, July 29, 2012 8:00AM
Rock Castle Gorge

11 miles, Strenuous

\$5.50 carpool fee, 57 miles from Roanoke

Located in Patrick County, on Blue Ridge Parkway land. After a steep 2,000-foot ascent, the hike parallels the Parkway – passing alternately through woods and open fields with extraordinary views. On the descent down the other side of the gorge, the hike passes some old cabin sites and a series of interesting rock formations. The last few miles are along Rock Castle Creek – a wild stream with many cataracts.

Hike will begin at the trailhead promptly at 8 am, carpool times will be planned accordingly.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
 theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Saturday & Sunday, August 4 & 5, 2012 8:30AM
Konnarock Work Hike Near Dragon's Tooth

0 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

The Konnarock Work Crew will be working on the trail near Dragon's Tooth. RATC members are encouraged to come join the work crew effort.

David Jones 540-552-3058
 dhjones@together.net

Sunday, August 5, 2012 8:00AM
Ribble Trail to Kimberling Creek (Rt 606)
Plus Dismal Falls

7.8 miles, Strenuous

\$6.00 carpool fee, 71 miles from Roanoke

Located in Giles County, this hike follows Dismal Creek for several miles. Much of the trail is lined with rhododendron. At 3.9 miles, the blue-blazed trail on right goes .3 miles to Dismal Falls. We will be hiking down and around Dismal Falls and back up to the A.T. This part of the creek is very scenic. The hike ends at Route 606 and Kimberling Creek. The A.T. goes over the creek on a footbridge.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Wednesday, August 8, 2012 5:00PM
Catawba Mountain (Rt 311) to McAfee's
Knob (Sunset Hike)

7.8 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 is a sunset hike; we will enjoy dinner at the top while watching the sunset before hiking back to our cars in the dark. Bring a headlamp!
Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Saturday, August 11, 2012 8:00AM
Wolf Creek Greenway

4.5 miles, Easy

No carpool fee, In Roanoke

We'll walk the Wolf Creek Greenway (Vinton & Roanoke County) from Hardy Road to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The walk will include a stop en route for breakfast at a popular Vinton restaurant.

Mark McClain 540-355-6525
..... mcclain.salem@gmail.com
Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930

Saturday, August 11, 2012 10:00AM
Lee Hollow (RT 621) - Trout Creek (RT 620)
113 Mile Hike #7

7.6 miles, Moderate

\$1.50 carpool fee, 14 miles from Roanoke

This is a joint hike with the Girl Scouts. 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 the mountain in 1971. The hike starts with a 1,000 foot ascent of Brush Mountain via a series of switchbacks. At 3.0 miles the top of the mountain is reached and the trail continues along the crest of the mountain. At 3.8 miles, a short blue-blazed trail on left leads to the monument. There are good views of the Craig Creek Valley from here. At 5.9 miles the trail starts a steep descent to Trout Creek and Route 620.

Barbara Duerk..... 540-343-1616
..... barbgary@cox.net

Sunday, August 12, 2012 1:00PM
Read Mountain

4.5 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 7 miles from Roanoke

Join us for a hike up the trail to the summit of Read Mountain. The trail was built by the mid-week work crew and is relatively new. There are good views of McAfee Knob from the summit of the mountain.

Mervin Brower..... 540-387-9732
..... mervinbrower@verizon.net
Blanche Brower..... blanche.brower@verizon.net

Wednesday, August 15, 2012 5:00PM
Chestnut Ridge Trail

5.4 miles, Moderate

No carpool fee, in Roanoke

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

Adam Wood..... 302-528-9680
..... adampaulwood@yahoo.com

**Saturday & Sunday, August 18&19, 7:00AM
Backpacking at Cumberland Gap
National Historical Park**

13 miles (option of 5 additional miles), Moderate
\$30.00 carpool fee, 245 miles from Roanoke + 20
mile car shuttle

This is it, the furthest point you can travel west and still remain in the state of Virginia (in fact part of the hike is actually in Kentucky). A moderate hike that affords gorgeous views with several unique points of interest including Skylight Cave, Sand Cave, and Hensley Settlement a settlement from the 1890s that we'll have time to explore on Saturday night. Includes school house, graveyard, general store and several other settlement buildings.

Must RSVP before August 12. Group size is limited to 10 to 12 people.

**Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com**

**Saturday, August 25, 2012 10:00AM
Sinking Creek (RT630) to Lee Hollow
(RT621) 113 Mile Hike #8**

10.4 miles, Strenuous
\$2.00 carpool fee, 18 miles from Roanoke

This is a joint hike with the Girl Scouts. 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 mountain was farmed. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond. The hike starts with a 1,200' ascent of Sinking Creek Mountain. At 0.5 miles the trail passes the giant Keffer Oak, a very large, historic tree. At 1.9 miles the ridgeline of the mountain is reached. Most of the rest of the hike is along the crest of the mountain, with views of Craig Creek Valley to the right. At 3.2 miles the blue blazed trail to Sarver Cabin Shelter is reached. At 9.5 miles pass the Niday Shelter and continue descent on trail to Route 621.

**Barbara Duerk 540-343-1616
..... barbgary@cox.net**

Chris Wilson 757-202-3331

Carina Hughes 588-0433

**Sunday, August 26, 2012 8:00AM
St. Mary's River**

8.8 miles, Strenuous
\$8.00 carpool fee, 63 miles from Roanoke

This hike will be along the St. Mary River in the St. Mary's Wilderness Area in Augusta County, north of Roanoke. We will be passing several swimming holes, so bring your bathing suit and a towel so you can take a dip in the river.

Group size is limited to 10 people since this is in a wilderness area.

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

**Saturday-Monday, Sept. 1- 3, 2012 7:00AM
Backpacking at Mt. Mitchell**

25 miles, Very Strenuous
\$30.00 carpool fee, 258 miles from Roanoke

Arguably the most difficult trail east of the Mississippi, the Mt. Mitchell trail lays claim to 7 mountains over 6,000 feet. The perfect trip for those interested in Peak Bagging. This is very strenuous trip that will lead to once in a lifetime views.

This trip is only for very experienced backpackers. RSVPs must be made before August 26. Group size is limited to 10 or 12
**Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com**

**Saturday, September 8, 2012 10:00AM
7 Summits – Poor Mountain**

5 miles, Moderate
\$1.00 carpool fee, 10 miles from Roanoke

This hike is part of the 7 Summits program, so it will be open to both the RATC and the public. There will be a nominal fee to participate in the program. It consists of the Overlook Trail, Canyon and Cascades Trails. There are nice view points on the Overlook Trail affording views to the west encompassing Ft. Lewis Mtn. There are over 130 rock steps on the Overlook Trail, then the descent down the Canyon Trail and a climb back on the Cascade Trail.

Group size is limited to 15 people.

**Mervin Brower 540-387-9732
..... mervinbrower@verizon.net**
Blanche Brower blanche.brower@verizon.net

Sunday, September 9, 2012 8:00AM
Longdale North Mountain Trail

11.2 miles, Strenuous

\$4.25 carpool fee, 42 miles from Roanoke

This is an out-and-back hike. The first two miles are an old forest service road track with gentle terrain. The trail then follows a stream for 1 mile up the hollow followed by 1/2 mile of long switchbacks to get to the top of the ridge. After that it is relatively flat until we get to our destination which are outcroppings with excellent valley views.

John Merkwan 540-904-2299
 merkwanjk@cox.net

Wednesday, September 12, 2012 5:00PM
Tinker Cliffs (Sunset Hike)

10 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.

This is a sunset hike; we will enjoy dinner at the top while watching the sunset before hiking back to our cars in the dark. Bring a headlamp!
Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
 theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Thursday, September 13, 2012 4:30PM
7 Summits – Brushy Mountain

6 miles, Moderate

\$0.50 carpool fee, 5 miles from Roanoke

This hike is part of the 7 Summits program, so it will be open to both the RATC and the public. There will be a nominal fee to participate in the program. This is a 6-mile loop hike near Hanging Rock, at the end of Timberview Road. The two mile ascent to Brushy Mountain is rather steep but the reward comes on the return. The hike offers glimpses of Carvin's Cove Reservoir, McAfee's Knob.

Group size is limited to 15 people.

Adam Wood 302-528-9680
 adampaulwood@yahoo.com

Saturday, September 15, 2012 8:00AM
Nelson's Rocks with
Possible Seneca Rocks Addition

3 miles, Easy

\$12.00 carpool fee, 119 miles from Roanoke

We will hike the Corridor and Gracie trails, and attendees will possibly have the option to do the zip line or rock course. If time permits, the group will head to Seneca Rocks, but this will be at the discretion of the hike leader. The hike at Seneca Rocks would add a possible four miles to the trip.

Group size is limited to 12 people.

Don Hoke 540-563-2902
 hokey-pokey@cox.net

Sunday, September 16, 2012 2:00PM
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. Dogs are not permitted on this hike, in compliance with Nature Conservancy policy.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331
 theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Tuesday, September 18, 2012 4:30PM
7 Summits – Read Mountain

4.5 miles, Moderate

\$1.00 carpool fee, 7 miles from Roanoke

This hike is part of the 7 Summits program, so it will be open to both the RATC and the public. There will be a nominal fee to participate in the program. Join us for a hike up the trail to the summit of Read Mountain. The trail was built by the mid-week work crew and is relatively new. There are good views of McAfee Knob from the summit of the mountain. **Group size is limited to 15 people.**

Adam Wood 302-528-9680
 adampaulwood@yahoo.com

Saturday, September 22, 2012 8:00AM
Salt Pond Mountain Work Hike

0 miles, Moderate
 \$6.00 carpool fee, 58 miles from Roanoke

We will be working on relocating a worn-out section of the A.T. near the War Spur Trail in the Mountain Lake Wilderness area in Giles County. Forest Service approval for the relocation is pending. If the approval is not obtained by the date of the work hike, another work hike will be substituted.

David Jones 540-552-3058
 dhjones@together.net

Saturday, September 22, 2012 10:00AM
Johns Creek (Rt 632) to Sinking Creek (Rt 630) 113 Mile Hike #9

8.3 miles, Strenuous
 \$3.00 carpool fee, 30 miles from Roanoke

This is a joint hike with the Girl Scouts. The hike is located in Craig and Giles counties. From Johns Creek Valley, the trail climbs steeply. At 2.0 miles it crosses route 601 at Rocky Gap. At 3.8 miles a blue blazed trail on right leads to White Rock, with great views of the New River Valley. The trail then descends, passing Laurel Creek Shelter at 5.1 miles. At 7.5 miles the trail crosses Route 42 in Sinking Creek Valley.

Barbara Duerk..... 540-343-1616
 barbgary@cox.net
Chris Wilson 757-202-3331
Carina Hughes 588-0433

Wednesday, September 26, 2012 4:30PM
7 Summits – Mill Mountain

3.4 miles, Moderate
 No carpool fee, in Roanoke

This hike is part of the 7 Summits program, so it will be open to both the RATC and the public. There will be a nominal fee to participate in the program. We will use a series of trails to do a loop hike on Mill Mountain. We will hike the Star Trail to the Roanoke star and then retrace our steps back to Riverland Road.

Group size is limited to 15 people.

Adam Wood 302-528-9680
 adampaulwood@yahoo.com

Saturday, September 29, 2012 9:30AM
AT Family Hike Day
Daleville (Rt 220) to Hay Rock

8 miles, Moderate
 No carpool fee, in Roanoke

This is a hike to celebrate AT Family Hike Day. 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.

Chip or Ashley Donahue 540-580-3015
 kivainfo@gmail.com

Sunday, September 30, 2012 8:00AM
7 Summits – Tinker Cliffs

10 miles, Moderate
 \$1.25 carpool fee, 12 miles from Roanoke

This hike is part of the 7 Summits program, so it will be open to both the RATC and the public. There will be a nominal fee to participate in the program. 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.

Group size is limited to 15 people.

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

Saturday, October 6, 2012 10:00AM
McAfee Parking to Dragon's Tooth Parking
113 Mile Hike #5

8.9 miles, Strenuous

\$1.00 carpool fee, 9 miles from Roanoke

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

Barbara Duerk..... 540-343-1616

..... **barbgary@cox.net**

Chris Wilson 757-202-3331

Sunday, October 7, 2012 1:30PM
Family Day Hike at Beagle Ridge Herb
Farm

3 miles, Moderately Easy

\$9.00 carpool fee, 90 miles from Roanoke

A moderate climb up to Raven's Roost affords a gorgeous view and spot for a late lunch. For those not up to the climb a shorter easier alternative hike can be had. After the hike we'll spend time with Ellen Reynolds, Virginia Master Naturalist and owner of Beagle Ridge. She has a wide array of plants and knowledge of the local ecosystem and natural areas of Southwestern Virginia. A fun trip for the whole family!

Chris & Edward Wilson..... 757-202-3331

..... **theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com**

Roanoke Appalachian
Trail Club Application
New & Renewal

If accepted for membership, I agree to:

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

Name(s) _____	New Member Packet fee	\$5.00 _____
Address _____	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



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The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
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