

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Spring 2014

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

**Corn Boil – August 2
Catawba Center**

WORK HIKES

Monday, April 7 - 8:30 AM
Monday, April 21 - 8:30 AM
Sunday, April 27 - 8:00 AM
Monday, May 5 - 8:30 AM
Monday, May 19 - 8:30 AM
Saturday, May 31 - 8:00 AM
Monday, June 2 - 8:30 AM
Sunday, June 29 - 8:30 AM
Monday, June 30 - 8:30 AM

Hike Scheduling

Contact Edward Wilson
540-904-8904 – RATChikemaster@gmail.com

BOARD MEETINGS

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

Monday, April 14, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by *Mike Vaughn*
Salem Library

Monday, May 12, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by *Chris Wilson*
Salem Library

Monday, June 16, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by *Kris Peckman*

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Lance Clark, Environmental Manager, Roanoke Cement, on receiving the Honorary Lifetime Membership Award:

Mike,

Thank you SO very much for the Honorary Lifetime Membership award.

I really appreciate it, it means a lot.

I have enjoyed all my interactions with the RATC and look forward continuing this partnership moving forward.

Thanks again!
Lance Clark

Save these Dates:

July 12-13 - Beginner Backpacking Trip
July 16-20 - Konnarock
August 1-5 - Konnarock
August 15-24 2014 - Backpacking Week

President's Report

I want to thank all those who attended our annual banquet and awards meeting on March 1. We had a great turnout. Bob and Kris Peckman gave a great presentation on their bike trip through Denmark last year. We also gave out our awards to our hike leaders and trail maintainers. Particularly noteworthy was Ed Burgess, who led 22 hikes last year.

The Charles Parry Memorial Volunteer of the Year Award went to Bruce Davidson. Bruce is the club's Land Management Supervisor. Since taking over this position last March, Bruce has worked diligently to create a boundary monitoring program for the A.T. lands that the club is responsible for. The club has not had this critical program for nearly 20 years. Through Bruce's efforts we now have a vigorous boundary monitoring program. Several serious boundary encroachments have been found in the past year. These would not have been located and dealt with without Bruce's commendable initiative.

We also presented our first annual Honorary Lifetime Membership Award. This award is presented to a non-member who has provided substantial assistance to the club and the Trail. This year's winner is Lance Clark from Roanoke Cement Company. Lance and his company have truly been great trail neighbors over the years. The land that the beautiful Andy Layne Trail goes through belongs to them. Last year the company made substantial improvements to the trailhead parking lot there. Company members have periodically come out and performed maintenance on the trail. Lance and Roanoke Cement are a pleasure to work with on trail issues.

We also elected a new slate of officers. The complete list of new officers can be found on our web site.

Over the past year our club members have accomplished a great deal. I'd like to highlight a few of them here:

We had an active trail maintenance program with many improvements made to the trail over the past year. The club also recently started a weekday work hike crew. They should provide substantial assistance in keeping the Trail in good shape.

The Konnarock trail crew made significant progress on completing the trail relocation around Bluff City in Giles County. They will be back again for two weeks this summer to work on this project.

Our recreational hike program was again very active, with two hikes being offered nearly every weekend, as well as a weekday hike being offered nearly every week.

Our Meetup group has grown from just over 100 members at the beginning of 2013 to over 400 now. Hiker participation on our hikes has also increased significantly.

I am always thrilled and humbled by the substantial efforts of our club volunteers each year. Without active members our club will not exist. In 2014 please consider helping support the club and the Appalachian Trail in some way, no matter how small. Please contact me if you are interested in helping out.

Mike Vaughn

Trail Supervisor's Report

Spring is in the air so it is time to return to trail work. For the next quarter we have many opportunities for members to get involved. First we have our weekend work hikes once a month. In April we will work between Big Stony Creek and Bailey Gap shelter clearing the few water bars that exist and installing new badly needed water bars. In May we will redig eroding trail tread south of Jenny Knob shelter. June will find us back on Catawba Mountain and working on trail issues on the way up to McAfee Knob.

Last quarter we initiated Monday work hikes. So far these work trips have taken care of several miscellaneous problems, one being to remove a beaver dam that was flooding the trail near a bridge just south

of the Route 42 crossing in Giles County. Since we are still getting accustomed to having these work hikes, we do not have a work agenda in place for each hike. Instead contact Jim Webb before the hike, and he can give an idea as to what type of work to expect and where the work will be done.

The spring overseers meeting will be held in late April (the date has not been set). This annual gathering offers all of the RATC's section overseers an opportunity to review the work they have done, report any issues on their section and to offer plans for the upcoming season. Anyone who is interested in adopting a section of trail as an overseer is welcome to attend.

We will again have the ATC's Konnarock Crew for two weeks this summer—July 16-20 and August 1-5. We will continue work on the Bluff City relocation (just outside of Pearisburg, VA). Last year I predicted we would finish this project, and that did not happen. So, I guess I will do it again, and predict we will finish this year. It is good to have goals! This project has taken much longer than anticipated, and its completion will be a joy.

Looking back there is not much to mention as far as work hikes. Our December work hike was cancelled due to weather and we do not schedule a work hike in January. In February eight of us visited Catawba Mountain on a beautiful winter day and worked on a couple of erosion problems.

The big news of the winter is that thanks to Homer and Therese Witcher and Jim Webb the Andy Layne Trail bridge is back in place. I have to admit that though this bridge has been washed out numerous times, I had never participated in putting it back in place, and I was befuddled. Since July when the flood washed the bridge out, I have had many disparate conversations with people in person, on the phone and via email. I talked to people who had done it before and heard stories of block and tackles anchored high in trees, of long ropes tied to trucks and of busted shoulders. The block and tackle belonged to a member who moved away, I don't even know how to find the entrance to drive through the field to the bridge, and my shoulders already ache with arthritis.

moved one of the stringers across the creek. Our plan is to go tomorrow morning and finish moving the stringers. We have about 4-5 strong guys but would welcome anyone else that wants to assist. Our plan is to meet at the Andy Layne parking lot at 10 AM.

On Sunday, February 2, at 10:00 am, I met that same group at the Andy Layne Trail, and by mid afternoon the bridge stringers were back in place. By the middle of the next week I received an email with a picture of the decking and handrails reinstalled.



Amazing—Again I express my thanks for these people getting this job done!

My final thought is for our work last year. During the annual meeting we announce the names of people who receive service awards for maintenance work. Three levels are acknowledged: for participating in four work hikes or otherwise working on the trail for 32 hours a RATC hat is given, for seven work hikes or 56 hours a RATC shirt is given, and for nine work hikes or 72 hours a hat and shirt are given. Since these awards are for maintenance work, the recipient can opt to substitute leather work gloves instead of the hat or shirt. The following members gave the noted hours of service (Note that the record keeping for these acknowledgements is volunteer based....if you earned an award and were not mentioned, please don't reach for a pulaski, but instead, contact the Trail Supervisor to correct this oversight):

4 Work Hikes (32 hours): Larry Austin, Liz Belcher, Gary Bible, Guy Brooks, Chase Davidson, Jerry Kyle, Vince Mier, Hannah Mitchell, Kris Peckman, Mike Reilly, Ron Sloan, Bennett Witcher & Anonymous

7 Work Hikes (56 hours): Steve Burt, Dick Clark, Bruce Davidson, Bill Floyd, Matt Gentry, John Miller, Glen Mitchell, Susanna Mitchell, Philip Strokus & Anonymous



Photos by Jim Webb

Then on Saturday evening, February 1, like manna from the World Wide Web, I received this email message from Therese:

Jim Webb, Homer and I went today and removed all of the decking. We then recruited Kevin and Jim Witt and

9 Work Hikes (72 hours): Blanche Brower, Mervin Brower, David Jones, Maurice Turner, Jim Webb, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Mike Vaughn & Anonymous

This list of volunteers is by no means complete. Many, many people come out on one or two work hikes and each contribution is valuable. The RATC is doing well—*Thank you!*

Thanks for visiting the trail maintenance corner and reading through these ruminations. Now, let's get back outside and enjoy spring in the mountains.

See you on the trail,

David Jones

Hikemaster's Report

Raise of hands, who's ready for spring?!? I know I am! As much as I say there is no such thing as bad hiking weather, just bad gear...I'm ready to not have to wear 5 layers out on the trail. As the weather begins to change and a new world emerges so do some of the things here in the RATC hiking world. There are a few important things that are changing beginning with this hike schedule that I'd like to make everyone aware of.

1) At the request of many of our members **our carpool rate has increased** (which it hasn't done in many, many years). The new rate will be .07 per mile. When looking at carpool rates (which can be very confusing, I know), keep in mind that when calculating that rate we also include any car shuttle. So while 2 hikes may both be 6 miles from Roanoke their carpool rates may not necessarily be the same. If you ever have any questions about this feel free to contact me.

2) The way we handle carpool fees will now be the same across the board. We used to leave this up to each individual hike leader as to how they did it, but have found a way that will work best for driver, passengers and hike leaders. Beginning immediately **hike leaders will collect the carpool fee at the lot when you arrive**, this will then be divided evenly among all drivers.

3) We are going to be **offering two Backpacking 101** courses this summer. One will be held in

Roanoke/Salem and the other in Wytheville. This class is one that is near and dear to my heart that I've been teaching for other organizations for the last 5 or 6 years. I'm excited to bring it to the RATC. This will be the perfect class for anyone looking to get into backpacking. This will teach all the basics and is aimed at those who have never backpacked before. The information for them can be found below in the hike schedule and online at our RATC meetup site or by contacting me.

4) And the last little bit of news is that you will now have a **new Hikemaster**. I know, it seems like I just got in this position, but it's time for something new. I was approached by Mike Vaughn (RATC president) and asked if I'd be willing to serve as Vice President for this upcoming year. I have graciously accepted that. So while I am no longer your hikemaster I found you (in my opinion) a really great replacement, my husband Edward Wilson. Hopefully he'll make this transition as smoothly as possible. And if you ever have any issues with him, just let me know and I'll handle him. :) He can be reached at RATChikemaster@gmail.com

As much as it saddens me to step down from this position I'm very excited by the new opportunities coming my way which will hopefully better the RATC as well. And don't worry, we'll still see each other out on the trails during some of the many hikes we have planned!

Chris Wilson

Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

<i>Ana Anderson</i>	<i>Phyllis Graham</i>	<i>Kenneth Myers</i>
<i>George Blonar</i>	<i>Kathryn Herndon</i>	<i>Deborah Pate</i>
<i>Timothy Bradley</i>	<i>Greg & Judy Jamison</i>	<i>Kristine Safford</i>
<i>Gregory & Debra Cascio</i>	<i>Brad & Patience Larkin</i>	<i>Leigh & Travis Stover</i>
<i>Jay Dowd</i>	<i>Charles McFarland</i>	<i>Ken Venable</i>
<i>Bob & Susan Egbert</i>	<i>Fletcher Meadema</i>	<i>Betty Werner</i>
<i>Steven & Sharon Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Craig & Sandy Meyers</i>	<i>Julie Yates</i>
<i>Josh & Gina Gilbert</i>	<i>Zachary Moor</i>	

And the following donors:

Virginia Waters "In the memory of Claire Hare Morra - a lover of all things good and true - and a wonderful aunt.", Phyllis Graham & Betty Werner "In honor of Chris Cage's completion of trail Fall 2013" and

<i>Jim & Jill Beeson</i>	<i>David Horst</i>	<i>Gene Rose</i>
<i>Lynn Bryant</i>	<i>Ursula & Siegfried Kolmstetter</i>	<i>Don & Carol Strum</i>
<i>Jan Katrina Cometa</i>	<i>Donna Logan</i>	<i>Nancy Snyder</i>
<i>Joanne Derryberry</i>	<i>John Lynham</i>	<i>Madeleine Taylor</i>
<i>Jay Dowd</i>	<i>Jeff Monroe</i>	<i>Connie & Rick Watson</i>
<i>Jeanne Duddy</i>	<i>John Miller</i>	<i>Jimmy & Kelly Whitney</i>
<i>Phyllis Graham</i>	<i>James Narramore</i>	<i>Adam Wood</i>
<i>Carina & Bill Hughes</i>	<i>David Niersbach</i>	

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

Edward Wilson

Troutville Trail Days

Troutville Trail Days is expanding! Presented by Outdoor Trails, this year's festival will celebrate the AT and other outdoor opportunities found in our area. It will be June 6-8, with different activities for the public and AT thru-hikers. The festival will kick off Friday, June 6 with a picnic for thru-hikers at Troutville Park. With free hiker camping, showers, and laundry, Troutville Park remains the "heart and soul" of the event. Hikers can spend a zero day or two relaxing and "catching up," or they can take advantage of the free hiker shuttles to visit the other activities. The Bear Bait 5K will start Saturday,

June 7 at 9 a.m. on the cross country course at Greenfield Park. Once again, thru-hikers race free!

Retail and craft vendors, informational booths, food, thru-hiker gear repair, clinics, and music will be located at Daleville Town Center on Saturday from 10-5 and Sunday 12-6. Event Zone will present a "Party in the Park" style concert Saturday evening, starting at 6. Sunday will also feature some cool dog events at Daleville Town Center. We hope to see you there! Find out more at troutvilletraildays.com.

OVERSEERS LIST

- 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
- VA Tech Outing Club:** US 460 bridge to Pine Swamp Shelter
- 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.)—*Vacant*
- 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, *Co-overseer requested*
- Section 12:** Niday Trail to VA 621 (Sinking Creek Mt.)—John Miller
- Section 13:** VA 621 to Audie Murphy Monument (Brush Mt.)—Mervin & Blanche Brower
- Section 14:** Audie Murphy Monument to VA 620 (Brush Mt.)—Lois Coche-Smith & Jen Schaeffer
- Section 15:** VA 620 to "Secret Trail" (Cove Mt.)—Shannon Palmer
- Section 16:** "Secret Trail" to VA 624 (Dragon's Tooth)—Bob & Kris Peckman
- Section 17:** VA 624 to VA 311(Sawtooth Ridge)—Maurice Turner, Roger Holnback
- Section 18:** VA 311 to Campbell Shelter (McAfee Knob)—Jim Webb, Guy Brooks, (Frank Haranzo)
- Section 19:** Campbell Shelter to Brickey's Gap—Bruce Davidson, Dallas St. Clair
- 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, VA (Tinker Ridge)—Vince Mier & Ronnie Crigger
- 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**—Glen, Hannah & Susanna Mitchell

Hike Reports

Tuesday, December 10, 2013 8:00 AM
Friday, December 13, 2013 8:00 AM
Big Horse Gap to New River (Rt 460)
113-Mile Hike #11

Ed Burgess (leader), Madeleine Taylor with Sassy, Jim Webb, David Horst, Dan Dennison, Brian Foy, Brian McGlothlin, David Jones



David and Brian taking in the view from the overlook, as Brian also looks on. - Burgess

What a great day for a hike with the bright sunshine and clear blue skies overhead. Snow and ice covered most all the landscape at Big Horse Gap and very beautiful as the rays of sunlight made it sparkle in the early morning cold. Everyone moved out quickly so as to produce some body heat to counteract the outside temperature. Everyone seemed in a wonderful frame of mind and, hiking quickly, we soon crossed Sugar Run Road as David took trail-condition notes into a small recorder. Then we began to climb up, down and around until we eventually arrived at Docs Knob Shelter. We regrouped and took a short break before continuing on around and up the mountain. This green tunnel must be very beautiful when the Rhododendrons are blooming.

We eventually came out of the tunnel and began a climb up to the ridge where we had lunch. After lunch we continued along the ridge with some fantastic views of the New River Valley and river far below and started the descent to the New River with one more awesome view as we came to Angels Rest. Dan and Madeleine took a few photos before the long descent to the New River, Route 460, and our vehicles. Jim and both Davids had taken a detour

along the proposed new route of the AT, that will keep the trail off the streets in that area.

Thursday, December 12, 2013 8:30 AM
Sprouts Run/Wilson Mountain Loop

Larry Austin (leader), Maurice Turner, Hugh Hall & K9 Rascal, Beth Heaton, Sally Evans, Joanne Derryberry, Mary Harshfield, Dan Dennison, Madeleine Taylor and Mike Vaughn

Due to the water level in Sprouts Run being too high to safely cross the stream so many times, the hike was changed to another one in the same general area. Meeting at 8:30 on a clear and cold morning, we drove to the trailhead at the Middle Creek Road picnic area. We hiked south on the AT to the Buchanan Trail, then followed the Buchanan Trail and Glenwood Horse Trail until they split. We then followed the Horse Trail south for a ways and hooked back up with the Buchanan Trail going back north. We then veered off the Buchanan Trail back onto the Horse Trail heading north until we reached an old grassy road leading down to Cove Creek. We followed Cove Creek to a lovely waterfall near the end. We proceeded across the footbridge over Jennings Creek and walked across Jennings Creek Road, headed into the woods where the former route of AT had been. Then we more or less bushwhacked over the ridge to the picnic pavilion (built by the CCC) just across Middle Creek from where we had parked. There we had some Christmas refreshments, enjoyed conversation and ended our day. We had a good group of hikers with a wide variety of scenery along the way.

Saturday, December 14, 2013 10:00 AM
Mill Mountain Greenway & Trails

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders), Gloria Clift, Julie Yates, Doug Fowley, Caryl Connolly & K9 Oliver

Our numbers dwindled from the signed up total of 12 to a hardy crew of six hikers who were undaunted by the weather which was cold, raining and sleeting. Despite the sparse turnout, our group was three times as large as the total number of other people we saw on the trail. Departing from Roanoke's Piedmont Park we walked to the summit of Mill Mountain via the Mill Mountain Greenway (old road), then down the Star Trail and over to the Roanoke River Greenway.

After a great lunch stop at China Tastes, we walked the last mile or so back to Piedmont Park. It was a good test for our foul weather camping apparel, and all passed with flying colors.



Julie, Doug, Gloria, Diana, & Caryl - McClain

Sunday, December 15, 2013 8:00 AM Cascades to Butt Mountain

Mike Vaughn (leader), Carl Cornett, Ivy Lidstone, Val Dymond, Rebecca Dickerson, Allan Dickerson, Jim Webb

It was cloudy and about 32 degrees when we started out on the scenic Cascades trail. There was just one other car in the parking lot when we started out. There was a light dusting of snow on the ground. The views along the stream were great. There was some ice at the waterfall, but not a substantial amount. The flow over the waterfall was very heavy due to recent rains. We then started our ascent up the mountain. We noticed that the snow was getting deeper the higher we went. We stopped at Barney's Wall to take in the view. Because of the cold and wind, the stop was brief. As we ascended to the summit of Butt Mountain we moved into the clouds. It was noticeably colder on top of the mountain. The trees were all covered in ice. With the cold, windy conditions, white sky and white ground it felt like a little like an eerie, alien place. There were no views from the summit. We descended the mountain much faster and were back to our cars by 3:00.

Tuesday, December 17, 2013 8:00 AM Big Horse Gap to Kimberling Creek (Rt 606) 113-Mile Hikes #12 & #13

Ed Burgess (leader), Madeleine Taylor, Mike Vaughn, Jim Webb, Dan Dennison, Sally Evans, Dave Horst, Dave Jones, Maya Bohler

With the shortest daylight hours of the year we hoped we could do the nearly 13 miles before darkness. Due to some road construction and some very slick and icy roads on the mountain it was about 2 ½ hours before we arrived at the trailhead to begin our hike. Once on the trail everyone traveled at a good pace but we split into 2 groups so the very fast hikers could finish more quickly and retrieve Dan's truck from the trailhead. The slower group I was with stopped at the one and only overlook of the day for photos of Pearis Mountain and Pearisburg in the distant valley. Then we continued on around the mountain and descended to Wapiti Shelter. After a quick lunch we followed the trail around the mountain with abundant Rhododendrons forming a long green tunnel. At times the trail followed a gentle old roadbed with magnificent pines along the trail, eventually arriving at the blue blazed trail that led to the falls where we took a snack break before continuing, getting to the vehicle that we had left at Kimberling Creek before dark.



Mike and Dan taking in the view of Pearis Mtn. in the distance and the valley below. - Burgess

As we drove back home, we phoned the fast group and learned that it was a very treacherous drive down from Big Horse Gap where we had left Dan's truck, sliding on a sheet of ice that covered the roadway. It was a great hike, but next time let's do it under better road conditions.

Thursday, December 19, 2013 8:00 AM
Kimberling Creek (606) - Jenny Knob (611)
113-Mile Hike #14

Ed Burgess (leader), Madeleine Taylor, Jim Webb, Hugh Hall, Nancy Chapin, Sally Evans, Dan Dennison



Madeleine chose to spend her birthday with friends hiking on the Appalachian Trail - Dan Dennison

What a difference a day can make! Tuesday was cold, with ice and snow and some horrific driving conditions, but today it was 60+ degrees and almost no snow or ice. It was below freezing as we crossed Kimberling Creek on one of the longest suspended bridges on the Appalachian Trail. However we warmed up quickly and the actual temperature seemed to rise as we ascended the mountain. We soon met Mike Vaughn, David Jones, and a group from the ATC office who were looking at what improvements could be made. After a chat we headed on up the mountain, followed the ridge for a mile or so and descended to Rt 608 where Hugh was taking a break. The temperature dropped as Madeleine, Hugh and I started the climb up the hollow since there was no sun hitting there and a cold wind was blowing down through the hollow. Hugh quickly outpaced Madeleine and me and neither of us wanted to stop in the cold hollow to eat. Soon we were higher where the sun was brightly shining and the warmth was comforting and we stopped for lunch. We continued on up to the ridge, passing the shelter where the others had lunch, and walked along it with several ascents and descents to Route 611 and our vehicles. Madeleine and I arrived just as the others were ready to leave. We all said our farewells and headed back home to Roanoke.

Even though the trail did not offer any magnificent overlooks and no photo opportunities, we did see one outstanding display of hay bale bears playing drums on Route 42 between Route 606 and Route 611.



Hay Bale Bears on Route 42 in Bland County between Routes 606 and 611- Dan Dennison

Sunday, December 22, 2013 10:00 AM
Cascades National Scenic Trail

Chris & Edward Wilson (leaders), Julie Yates, & Maxime Leurent

The weather for today's hike wasn't so great. Rainy and chilly (though warmer than it has been lately). Fortunately, the company on today's hike was the exact opposite, bright and cheery. It was wonderful getting to hike with a few new members. Julie just joined the RATC and has a goal of hiking the West Highland Way in Scotland in 2015. She's using RATC-led hikes as a way to help her work up to this goal. We wish her all the best of luck in this! (And I'm still willing to fly in your suitcase in order to go with you :) Maxime is probably one of our most faraway visitors. He is here on an internship all the way from Germany! It was great to get to know all about another culture and a whole other world of hiking. The only downside to our hike was when we reached the falls there was a dead coyote next to the walkway. Thanks so much to Andrew Downs (ATC) for helping get this taken care of with the Forest Service (really special thanks to the Forest Service for doing all these yucky tasks to make our trails so awesome!).

**Saturday, December 28, 2013 10:00 AM
Bottom Creek Gorge Nature Preserve**

Chris & Edward Wilson (leaders), Leigh Stover, Travis Stover, Milissia Webb, Dawn Lamb, Cynthia Munley, Frank Munley, Mangala Kumar, Michelle Twitchell, Rosie Hagen, Nancy Stafford, Virginia Klara, Blake Mitnick, Greg and Colleen Johnson

Wow, what a large group! Usually we don't take this large a group in a Nature Preserve but Bottom Creek has some wonderful large trails where impact is minimal (this doesn't mean bring your 100 member church here one Sunday! :) This trip we actually had a waiting list and had to turn members away (which is always a painful thing to do). This is a good reminder that rsvping as early as you can guarantees you get a spot in the trips you want. Overall the hike was gorgeous. A wonderful (though a little cool) day to explore the many wonders of Bottom Creek. Among the things spotted and explored were a graveyard, several old cabins, and old homestead with old "trash" still plenty evident on the ground, and of course the famous Bent Mountain Falls which were partially frozen. They were quite spectacular to admire.

**Wednesday, January 1, 2014 10:00 AM
Tinker Cliffs**

Mike (leader) & Sheila Vaughn, Kris & Bob Peckman, Dan Dennison, Carl Cornett, Ana Anderson, Jim Webb



The Bridge to Nowhere – Cornett

It was an excellent day to be out for a hike. The weather and the company of the fellow hikers were great. The water was cold but the views were outstanding



The water was cold! - Cornett

**Saturday, January 11, 2014 10:00 AM
Ribble Trail to Kimberling Creek Rt606
Hike #13, plus Dismal Falls**

Chris & Edward Wilson (leaders), Fred Meyer

A super small group today thanks to the threat of rain. Still we brave few threw on our raingear and headed out. Fortunately the weather wasn't nearly as bad as they called for. A little rain to begin with and then just gray, cloudy skies (which was quite okay with us). We spent some time checking out trail conditions as we hiked so we could report back to the trail maintainers (at their request) about any problem areas. Fortunately not too much to report other than a few much needed water bars-made very obvious by the massive amount of rain we've been having. The falls were beautiful and flowing with lots of water (see rain is a good thing!). This is one of the few times we've ever been out to the falls when no one else was around (another good thing about the rain). Overall a great day, thanks Fred for driving all the way down from West Virginia to keep us company on this hike.

**Thursday, January 16, 2014
Cove Mountain & Little Cove Mountain Circuit**

Mike Vaughn (leader), Sally Evans, Jim Webb, Joanne Derryberry, Dave Horst, Larry Austin, HR Blankenship

It was a clear, brisk morning as we started up the Little Cove Mountain Trail. We made a short side trip to the unnamed waterfall just off the trail. The water was flowing great over the falls. After a steady three-mile climb we reached the A.T. and started heading north. With the leaves off, the views from the trail

were fantastic. We stopped for lunch at the Cove Mountain shelter and then began our descent of Cove Mountain. We soon reached the road and walked along Jennings creek to the cars. A great day to be out in the woods.

**Saturday, January 18, 2014 2:30 PM
Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail
(Mason Creek Greenway)**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders), Rupert Cutler, Carl Cornett, Audrey Letwinch, Anna Pryor Cash, Hugh Hall (&Rascal), Randall Ploof, Sharon Probst, Cheryl Crowell, and Doug Fowley

We set out in mid-afternoon on a cold and windy (but sunny) day and walked from the Kessler Mill Parking area along this trail which follows an old railroad grade out to Hanging Rock. After a brief stop at the creek to check out the area where a new footbridge will soon be built (connecting the trail to the Hanging Rock Battlefield Monument), we reversed course and headed back. Most of the group stopped en route for a sampling of the craft beers at Parkway Brewing Company, which is right on the trail (the site of the monthly Happy Hiker Hour get-togethers).

**Tuesday, January 21, 2014 8:30 AM
North Mountain McAfee Knob**

Mike Vaughn (leader), Maya Bohler, & Jim Webb

This hike was supposed to be on North Mountain but was changed to McAfee's Knob due to snow and poor visibility. As we started up the trail there was about two inches of snow on the trail. It was still snowing lightly. The woods looked great in the blanket of snow. When we started up the final section of trail past the fire road, we were surprised to see a young couple coming down. They must have gotten an early start. They were the only other people we saw out on the trail that day. At the Knob, the visibility was only a few hundred yards. There was a cold wind blowing so we didn't linger long there. The hike back down to the parking lot was uneventful.

**Sunday, January 26, 2014 8:00 AM
Sulphur Ridge Loop Plus**

John Merkwan (leader), Kris Peckman, H.R. Blankenship, Carol Rowlett, Marc Williams, Ana Anderson

The weather moderated a bit to get this hike in between two cold weather spells. I say a bit because

the temperature still stayed below freezing for the hike. At the time there was no snow in Roanoke but on the trail we encountered drifts from 12-18" on the ridge line. What would a winter hike be without some snow? I did manage to take my hands out of my mittens long enough to take one picture of my group on the log bridge over the creek on the Sulphur Ridge trail. The group was all smiles (see photo) but if we would have had another hiker or two I think we may have had a bridge collapse as a large crack was heard by the assembled group. The views were very good on this crystal clear day especially on Price mountain; a very nice outing.



HR, Ana, Marc, Carol & Kris – Merkwan

**Monday, January 27, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Cancelled due to weather

**Thursday, January 30, 2014 8:00 AM
A.T., Punchbowl to Long Mountain Wayside**

Postponed to the Spring due to Blue Ridge Parkway road closures.

**Saturday, February 1, 2014 10:00 AM
Belfast Trail to the Devil's Marblyard**

Postponed until April.

**Sunday, February 2, 2014 8:30 AM
~~Petites Gap to James River~~
North Mountain**

Mike Vaughn (Hike Leader) Sorry, the dog ate the list!

It was a clear, brisk morning as we started up the Catawba Valley Trail to the summit of North

Mountain. After a steady climb of 1,800 feet over 2.5 miles we reached the North Mountain ridge and headed south on the North Mountain Trail. The views along the ridgeline were fantastic, particularly of McAfee Knob to the east. After a brief lunch stop, we started our descent off the mountain, reaching our cars around 3:00 p.m.

**Monday, February 3, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Cancelled due to weather

**Saturday, February 8, 2014 11:00 AM
Tinker Creek and Roanoke River Greenways**

Mark McClain & Diana Christopulos (leaders), Julie Yates, Judy Kriskern, Joe Campbell, Julie Janoff, Cheryl Crowell, Hugh Hall, Doug Fowley, Georgia Gallaher, Sharon Probst, Caralee Eicher

Forecasts of snow turning to rain turned out to be off target, leaving us a cold but otherwise nice day to enjoy this hike on Roanoke's most natural greenway trail, Murray Run. Starting from the VWCC campus we headed west. We took a detour in Fishburn Park on a trail that runs right along the creek that is the greenway's namesake, then across Brambleton and on over to Grandin. We then marched over to Grandin Village to enjoy lunch at Grace's Place before retracing our steps, this time taking the greenway route through Fishburn Park, for a total walk of about six miles.

**Sunday, February 9, 2014 1:00 PM
Daleville Rt 220 to Mountain Pass Rd Rt 652**

Mervin Brower (leader), Blanche Brower (assistant), Sue Scanlin

The hike started from Daleville commuter parking lot. The day was cloudy with a temp about 40°F. We walked across the new bridge at 652 which looks very nice. It was too cold to stop and eat a snack so we turned around and walked back. There was a freight train going by as we came down the hill which allowed us to get a good look at it. It took us about an hour to do our hike.

**Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:30 AM
McAfee Parking to Andy Layne Parking Rt 779
113-Mile Hike #4**

Cancelled due to deep snow.

**Saturday, February 15, 2014 10:00 AM
Bottom Creek Gorge**

Cancelled - Two feet of snow prevented us from being able to get to the trailhead..

**Monday, February 17, 2014 8:30 AM
Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Jim Webb (leader), Mike Vaughn and Dave Horst

We installed water bars and steps on the Andy Layne trail.

**Sunday, February 23, 2014 9:00 AM
Catawba Mountain Trail Rehab.
Work Hike**

Steve Burt, Roger Gildersleeve, Jason Hoepker, Aury Holtslag, Carina Hughes, David Jones, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb

On February 13 over 20 inches of snow had fallen on Roanoke; ten days later on February 23 RATC club members were on Catawba Mountain digging in dry soil. What a difference ten days make.

Eight people gathered to "brave the elements." This is less than our typical work hikes, but David Jones, the Trail Supervisor, had delayed deciding whether to cancel the work hike till the day before, so we are lucky we had the people come out who did.

We were on our quarterly McAfee Knob rehabilitation work hike. Today our goals were to stop a section of trail from sliding down the mountain and given enough time install rock steps on a steep eroded section.

To stop the trail from sliding down the mountain we either build a low, rock wall or we anchor logs on the downhill side to support the trail. The area where we were working had a 30-foot section of trail to "pull" back up the mountain to its original position. It just so happens that this section of trail has been migrating "south" for a long time. Such that, about ten yards up hill, where the trail used to be was a 10-foot piece of pressure-treated 6x6 post attached to a rock slab. Since the trail across the slab was not ideal, it had long ago "moved" away, and the 6x6 was a strange anomaly sitting on the bedrock. So, our group decided to detach it, and use it for the current trail.

But, one 10-foot 6x6 post does not hold 30 feet of trail, so we then procured a 12-foot log and placed this log at the end of the post. But, one 10-foot post and one 12-

foot log does not hold 30 feet of trail. It just so happens that three of our volunteers were guys from Virginia Tech, with strong bodies and lots of energy. So, for the remainder of our trail reinforcement these guys scoured the hillside for David Jones' favorite trail building material, BFR's or Big Friendly Rocks. For the last section of this project, we built a small retaining wall to keep the trail in place.

For you cross-stitch fans out there, do you see what we did in trail maintenance terms? In 30 feet of trail reinforcement we created a "sampler!" Ten feet of manufactured post, 12 feet of log and 8 feet of stone! I am sure that Bob Proudman, the man at the ATC who literally wrote the book on trail maintenance, would be his namesake--proud. I am sure that RATC's Bill Gorge would make the Mid Week Crew take it out and put it back right. Our group, we stopped and had lunch on a warm, sunny day at the end of February.

After lunch we finished the trail reinforcement and moved ahead to just past bridge 5. Here we gathered more BFR's and added another step in an eroded section where we had worked on a previous work hike.

It was a great day. At the parking lot we enjoyed cold drinks and trail tales of BFR's while sitting on the tailgate of a truck on a very nice, unseasonably warm, February day.

Please join us next time!

**Monday, February 24, 2014 – 8:00 AM
Johns Creek (Rt. 632) to Sinking Creek (Rt. 630) 113-Mile Hike # 9**

Ed Burgess (leader), Sally Evans, Joanne Derryberry, Madeleine Taylor, Sandie Meyers, Richard Kurshan

What a difference a week made in the weather. The sun was hitting the tops of the mountains and it looked as though it was going to be great weather for a hike. Of course after nearly 2 feet of snow most any weather without snow would look great. And to make this hike extra special, Sally would complete the entire RATC section of the AT and earn her patch.

Once we had the shuttle car in place and had driven to the trailhead at Johns Creek, I think everyone was excited to get on the trail. It was about 9:40 as we headed up Johns Creek Mountain, Sally and Joanne went ahead and we planned to meet at Kelly Knob to regroup. The rest of us still kept a good pace, until about ½ mile before crossing Route 601 at Rocky Gap. We hit some snow and so we all went very

slowly and carefully. Once we arrived at the ridge of the mountain it was mostly free of snow and ice but the wind was blowing with much more force. We hiked the next 2+ miles very quickly and took the side trail over to Kelly Knob and had lunch. The wind subsided somewhat as we ate on the rocks at this beautiful overlook.



Sandie, Richard, Ed & Rusty, and Madeleine
Joanne and Sally Photo by Derryberry

After lunch and a few photos we headed down the mountain and to our shuttle car. The group spread out as we descended the mountain but we regrouped once again at the Laurel Creek Shelter side trail. After a short break it was back to the trail for the final descent to Route 42 crossing. This is a very beautiful area through the open fields after passing Piney Ridge. The only discouraging thing on this section is the soggy area just before coming to Route 42. After crossing Route 42 it was one final climb up through the fields and then down to Sinking Creek and Route 630 parking area where we had left our shuttle car.



Madeleine, Joanne & Sandie - Burgess

Tuesday, February 25, 2014 8:30 AM
Friday, February 21, 2014 8:30 AM
Fuller Rocks, Big Rocky Row

Mike Vaughn (leader), Mary Harshfield, Jimbo Harshfield, Cynthia Munley, Sheila Vaughn, Greg Edwards, & Deb Pate



Mary, Jimbo & Pinka
 Greg, Sheila, Mike, Meghan - Munley

It was a bright sunny, cold day when we started out from Roanoke. We started the 2,500' ascent to Fullers Rocks at a brisk pace. At the top we stopped for lunch and enjoyed the awesome view of the James River and the surrounding mountains. The temperature had risen to about 60 degrees in the bright sunshine. There were more great views at the summit of Big Rocky Row before we pushed on to Saddle Gap and took that trail back to the road and our cars. We all greatly enjoyed our ten-mile walk in the woods.

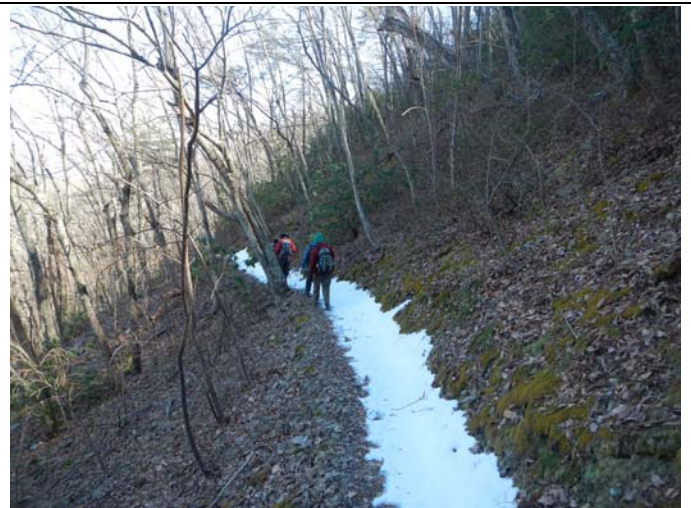
Thursday, February 27, 2014 8:00 AM
James River Face Wilderness Hike

Jeff Monroe (leader), Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Madeleine Taylor, Maya Bohler, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Mike Smith, John Crawford and Wayne Jaffery



Jeff was documenting trail features - Monroe

The maximum ten people attended this hike through the James River Face Wilderness on a cold and sometimes windy but cloudless winter day. The group was from diverse places, with the leader from Charlottesville, a carpool from Roanoke, and separate vehicles travelling from Elkton and Lynchburg. Once everybody found the ending trailhead, we shuttled about 2 miles to the starting trailhead. We first climbed the Piney Ridge Trail starting at 975 feet elevation. The Piney Ridge Trail was the original Appalachian Trail route through the area (before it became federally designated wilderness). The trail was newly pruned.



We did need our Yak Trax - Monroe

Then we took the current Appalachian Trail down from 2700 feet elevation to 830 feet at Matt's Creek Shelter, enjoying winter views of Balcony Falls on the James River and Rocky Row along the way. The faster hikers encountered a group of Forest Rangers at the shelter, but they scattered after hearing more of us were on the way.



The James, Great color on the eBlazer - Monroe

We ended the journey by hiking about three miles on the Matt's Creek Trail, which is the alternate A.T. when the route to the James River Foot Bridge is flooded. We could see the Foot Bridge crossing the river from high on the bluff. The hike turned out to be 12.3 miles long, a bit longer than the estimated "about 9 miles of hiking," but nobody seemed to mind. Despite the cold and occasional wind gusts at the higher elevations, it was a great day to be out!

**Saturday, March 1, 2014 8:00 AM
Invasive Species Removal Workhike**

Josh Kloehn (leader), Kris Peckman (reporter), Larry Austin, Joanne Derryberry, Carina Hughes, Jerry Kyle, Fred Meyer, Bob Peckman, Jen Schaeffer, Jim Webb, Julie Yates

Josh of ATC gave us instructions and handed out tools beside Route 42, then we hiked up a short unmarked trail to the AT. There is a large open area just south of the Kimberling Creek bridge which has become overgrown with mostly invasive species, and I mean REALLY overgrown. We set to work with a chain saw (Jerry) and hand tools (loppers, pulaskis, hand saws) and whacked at bush honeysuckle, Japanese honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and autumn (Russian) olive. We cleared an area about 100 yards long and 20-30 feet wide beside the trail, quite a noticeable change. We know it will grow back, but if we keep after it, eventually the rootstocks will die and hopefully native species will return.

Another work hike for April 5th—join us in the fun!

**Sunday, March 2, 2014 8:00 AM
Rt 641 to Rice Fields Shelter and Back**

Fred Meyer (leader), Carl Cornett, Ana Anderson, and Julie Buchikos

It started as a nice sunny day and at the request of one participant, we started at the Senator Shumate Bridge and went under US 460. There were about 5 stream crossings, one before we crossed 641 and about 4 others as we went to the Rice Fields Shelter where we had lunch. At the top we noticed a rock which stood out as number one and Carl took a great picture with the rock in front of us. The view

at the top was fabulous. On the way down it started to rain off and on. Since we added about 1.5 mile at the start, this made the hike about 13 miles.



Fred, Ana & Julie with the #1 Rock - Cornett

**Saturday, March 8, 2014 11:00 AM
Murray Run Greenway and Grandin Village
Roanoke River & Tinker Creek Greenways**

Mark McClain, Diana Christopulos (leaders), Darlene Beshear, Judy Kreskern, Jackie Moore, Gloria Clift, Nancy Stafford, Joanne Derryberry, Cheryl Crowell

Spring was in the air on this warm sunny day, and it was just perfect for a walk on the easternmost extent of the Roanoke River Greenway. We started at the Bennington trailhead and walked through the neighborhood to connect with the greenway trail that ascends the ridge adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant, noticing a new viewing stand that has been set up at this popular bird-watching spot. People were out on their bikes, jogging, and fishing in the river. Crossing the 600-foot hike/bike bridge, we were able to get through the construction area on the other side where a new pipeline is being installed - the workers were off for the weekend. This might not be passable on workdays, though the construction should be finished soon. We then walked the Tinker Creek Greenway to its northern terminus and then over to Bob's Restaurant, a popular Vinton bar & grill, for a delicious lunch of burgers, sandwiches and salads. Bellies full, we retraced our steps to the starting point, for a total walk of about five miles.

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 Chris Wilson at 757-202-3331 or theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com.

Saturday April 05, 2014 6:30 AM Rock Castle Gorge Loop

11.0 miles; Strenuous

\$8.00 carpool fee; 57 miles from Roanoke

This is my favorite Virginia hike. Elevation: 3209 ft.

This extensive 10.8-mile loop trail ranges in elevation from 1700 feet to 3572 feet at Rocky Knob.

Encompassing 4500 acres of land, this site abuts the boundaries of both the Blue Ridge Plateau and the Virginia Piedmont. Rock Castle Gorge, a 1500-foot ravine, carved by the waters of Rock Castle Creek, is the focal point of this trail. Several trails originate at this trailhead. This hike is very strenuous, and will start at the end of CCC Camp Road, just off of SR 8. We will complete the loop traveling in a counter clockwise direction. Right from the start we will ascend the most treacherous/grueling part of the hike. The trail is narrow and ascends approximately 1200 feet for about 1.5 miles. Spring can be very productive for large numbers of warblers, thrushes, and vireos. Cerulean, blackpoll and yellow-rumped warblers are likely to be found during migration. Nesting species include American redstart, black-throated green and Kentucky warblers, and abundant indigo bunting. This rejuvenated area contains over 60 species of native trees and 200 species of

wildflowers. Wild turkey, red fox, woodchuck, white-tailed deer, black bear and bobcat are local denizens. Hike will take place rain or shine, so bring appropriate gear.

Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
..... mphoppy@gmail.com

Saturday April 05, 2014 8:00 AM Invasive Species Removal Work Hike Kimberling Creek – Bland County

\$6.00 Carpool fee from Roanoke

Meet at the Orange Market at 8:00

Then at Exit 118A Park & Ride at 8:30

We'll be using loppers, folding saws, and hand-pruners to cut out and eliminate Multi-floral Rose, Japanese & Bush Honeysuckle, Oriental Bittersweet, and Autumn Olive. We'll improve the views from this special spot, help native plants reestablish themselves, and enhance the surrounding habitat for wildlife.

Mike Vaughn.....Sign up on Meetup

Sunday April 06, 2014 8:00 AM
McAfee Parking (Rt. 311) to Dragon's Tooth
Parking 113-Mile Hike #5

8.9 Miles; Strenuous

\$1.00 carpool fee; 6 miles from Roanoke

The hike begins at the McAfee 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.

Carina Hughes..... 540-588-0433
 **chughes@rcs.k12.va.us**

Sunday April 06, 2014 8:30 AM
McAfee Parking (Rt. 311) to McAfee Knob

7.8 miles; Moderate

\$1.00 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 Roanoke City.

Brendle Wolfe..... 540-968-2750
 **blwolfe@mail.roanoke.edu**

Monday April 07, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike

Contact hike leader for information.

Jim Webb..... 540-562-8896
 **Startover14@peoplepc.com**

Sunday April 13, 2014 8:00 AM
Bearwallow Gap Loop

9.5 miles; Strenuous

\$4.00 carpool fee; 27 miles from Roanoke

This loop hike will begin at the Bearwallow Gap Glenwood Horse Trail Parking off Pico Road near Buchanan VA. It will follow the GHT for about 3/4 mile and then head up Bearwallow Creek Hollow a short distance before turning off to head up Cleatus Spring Hollow (no designated trail). We will follow this hollow to the ridgeline of Cove Mountain where we will intersect the AT. We will hike the AT south to Bearwallow Gap (Route 43), crossing the road and climbing up the mountain via the AT. We then go off trail along this ridgeline to a rock formation providing spectacular views to the north and west. There will be

a very steep descent down the western side of this mountain to a point where we intersect the GHT again and follow it back to our starting point.

Larry Austin..... 540-254-2092
 **laustin4hike@aol.com**

Wednesday April 16, 2014 8:00 AM
A.T.: Spy Rock to Crabtree Falls

8 miles; Moderate

\$8.00 carpool fee; 57 miles from Roanoke

This hike starts behind the Montebello Fish Hatchery and goes up Spy Rock Road to the A.T. then north along the A.T. for a scramble up Spy Rock. The group then continues north on the A.T. over Maintop Mountain to Crabtree Farm Road and down the Crabtree Falls Trail for a total of about 8 miles hiked. The hike is one way on the trail so a short car drop is required (about 5 miles). Roanoke-based hikers will meet the Charlottesville-based leader at the trailhead with details distributed after reservations close. Please RSVP at least 48 hours in advance.

Jeff Monroe 434-962-1808
 **monroejeff@gmail.com**

Friday April 18, 2014 10:00 AM
Black Horse Gap to Bearwallow Gap
8.5 miles; Strenuous

\$1.50 carpool fee; 9 miles from Roanoke

This hike starts at the northernmost part of our section of the A.T. The trail parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway and has great views. There are plenty of mountain laurel, rhododendron and azalea along this section of trail.

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

Saturday April 19, 2014 10:00 AM
Belfast Trail to the Devil's Marbleyard

3.0 miles; Easy

\$5.00 carpool fee; 35 miles from Roanoke

Located a few miles beyond Natural Bridge Station, this popular hike starts about an hour's drive from Roanoke. The route follows the Belfast Trail in the Jefferson National Forest and heads steeply uphill for a little over two miles. At this point the Devil's Marbleyard appears just to the left of the trail. This is an eight-acre field of quartzite boulders which affords endless scrambling opportunities (watch out for snakes though) and great views. The return is along the same route.

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

**Saturday April 19, 2014 8:00 AM
Half Marathon Training Hike**

13.4 Miles; Strenuous. No carpool

This is our annual training hike for the Blue Ridge Walking Half Marathon. We will generally follow the course of the event with only a few short breaks. This year the route ascends BOTH Mill Mountain and Peakwood so is more strenuous than in previous years. Contact leader or check Meetup site for more details as they become available. No shuttle - this hike will start and end at the same location (TBA). Survivors will gather for (optional) lunch somewhere near the ending point following the walk. To see the route go to blueridgemarathon.com.

Mark McClain 540-355-6526
..... mcclain.salem@gmail.com
Diana Christopulos..... 540-387-0930

**Sunday April 20, 2014 8:00 AM
Chessie Nature Trail**

6.2 miles; Easy

\$7.00 carpool fee; 47 miles from Roanoke

Following a former towpath and railroad bed, the Chessie Nature trail parallels the Maury River between Lexington and Buena Vista. Flat walking with plenty of geological, natural, pastoral and historical features to observe.

Kris Peckman..... 540-366-7780

**Monday April 21, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Contact hike leader for information.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896
..... Startover14@peoplepc.com

**Friday April 25, 2014 8:00 AM
Fortune's Cove**

5.3 miles; Strenuous

\$12.50 carpool fee; 90 miles from Roanoke

Near Lovington is a preserve of over 29000 acres owned by the Nature Conservancy with relatively intact forest habitat which hosts rare plant communities on a series of rocky glades. Please note this is a scouting hike for future trips. Hike leader has not previously hiked this.

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

**Saturday April 26, 2014 8:00 AM
Hanging Rock State Park**

10 miles; Strenuous

\$14.00 carpool fee; 100 miles from Roanoke

Sites include Window, Hidden and Upper Cascades Falls, Hanging Rock and Wolf Rock trails.

Fred Meyer 304-744-9219

**Sunday April 27, 2014 8:00 AM
Big Stony Creek/Bailey Gap Work Hike**

\$6.00 carpool fee; 62 miles from Roanoke

We will be working on trail tread, improving water management & rehabilitating steps.

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

**Sunday April 27, 2014 12:00 PM
Black Horse Gap to Curry Gap
113 Mile Hike #1**

6.9 miles; Moderate

\$1.50 carpool fee; 9 miles from Roanoke

This hike is located in Botetourt County. From Black Horse Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway (elevation 2400 feet) the trail heads south. There are limited views on this section of trail. In 2.4 miles a blue blaze trail on right leads to the Wilson Creek Shelter. After crossing Wilson Creek the trail ascends steeply. It then descends steadily and crosses Curry Creek. From there it ascends steeply on switchbacks to the Salt Pond Road crossing. Go left on Salt Pond Road for .9 miles back to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

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

**Thursday May 01, 2014 8:30 AM
Sprouts Run/Wilson Mountain Loop**

8 miles; Moderate

\$3.25 carpool fee; 23 miles from Roanoke

This loop hike takes in the Sprouts Run Trail which follows the beautiful stream named Sprouts Run for over 3 miles. On this trail mother nature hopefully will reward us with some beautiful wild flowers including the rare White-Haired Leather Flower. There are several cascading waterfalls along this route as well as some impressive trees. At the terminus of this trail we will intersect a Forest Service Road which we will follow for about a mile to its junction with the Wilson Mountain Trail. The Wilson Mn. Trail mainly follows the ridgeline of Wilson Mn. providing views east and west including the James River at a couple of points and the Solitude Valley.

Larry Austin 540-254-2092
..... laustin4hike@aol.com
Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

Saturday May 03, 2014 8:00 AM
Catawba Mountain to Trout Creek (VA 620)

13.8 miles; Strenuous

\$3.00 carpool fee; 14 miles from Roanoke

The hike will begin at McAfee's Knob Parking Lot on Rt. 311 and end at VA 620 - Trout Creek. This hike provides several elevation changes, rock climbing, fence ladders and creek crossings. We will stop at Dragon's tooth for a break and continue on to Trout Creek. Afterwards we will car pool back to the 311 parking lot. Hike will take place rain or shine so bring appropriate gear.

Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
 mphoppy@gmail.com

Sunday May 04, 2014 8:00 AM
Douthat State Park Waterfalls Hike

About 10 miles; Strenuous

\$6.00 carpool fee; 43 miles from Roanoke

\$5.00 Car parking fee at this park.

Hike Stony Run trail, see Stony Run Falls.

Tuscarara Overlook, Blue Suck Falls and trail.

Locust Gap and Beards Gap Hollow trails.

Fred Meyer..... 304-744-9219

Monday May 05, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike

Contact hike leader for information.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896
 Startover14@peoplepc.com

Friday May 09, 2014 8:30 AM
John's Creek to Wind Rock

11.4 miles; Strenuous

\$6.00 carpool fee; 45 miles from Roanoke

From Route 632 in Johns Creek Valley we will climb up Lone Pine Peak in the Mountain Lake Wilderness Area on the Appalachian Trail. We will pass the War Spur shelter along the way. We will stop at Wind Rock and retrace our steps. There are expansive views of the surrounding mountains from Wind Rock. The elevation gain on the hike is 2000 feet. Please RSVP 24 hours in advance for this hike.

Mike Vaughn..... sign up on Meetup

Saturday May 10, 2014 9:00 AM
Roaring Run

2 miles; Easy

\$4.00 carpool fee; 28 miles from Roanoke

Located in Botetourt County, the hike visits a cascading stream and scenic waterfalls and a standing pre-civil war iron ore furnace used for making iron ingots stoves and other iron products for the building of America.

Ed Martinedwardnmartin@gmail.com
 434-760-2513 (C).....540-366-7061 (H)

Sunday May 11, 2014 8:00 AM
Devil's Marbleyard Circuit

8.3 miles; Moderate

\$5.00 carpool fee; 35 miles from Roanoke

We will use the Belfast, Gunter Ridge and Glenwood Horse trails to form an 8.3 mile loop.

The climb up Belfast Trail is extremely steep and rocky at times but a visit to the Devil's Marbleyard will make it memorable. The trek along Gunter

Ridge is mostly flat until you descend along 14 switchbacks to join the Glenwood Horse Trail,

which you'll follow in and out of short coves and up and over slight hills back to the starting point. To mix things up I am thinking of starting near Hellgate Creek rather than the Belfast trail.

John Merkwan 540-904-2299

Wednesday May 14, 2014 8:00 AM
A.T.: Punchbowl to Long Mountain Wayside

10.2 miles; Strenuous

\$11.00 carpool fee; 80 miles from Roanoke.

This hike is northbound on the A.T. from the Blue Ridge Parkway MP 51.7 near Punchbowl Shelter to the Long Mountain Wayside where the A.T. crosses U.S. 60. The hike starts out around 2200 feet before dropping to 1000 feet between the 2 and 4 mile marks. From there it slowly climbs back to 2000 feet, passing by the Lynchburg Reservoir and ruins of homes owned by freed slaves after the Civil War before being evacuated in 1908. The hike is one way on the trail so a car drop is required. Roanoke-based hikers will meet the Charlottesville-based leader at the trailhead with details distributed after reservations close. Please RSVP at least 48 hours in advance.

Jeff Monroe 434-962-1808
 monrojeff@gmail.com

Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

Saturday May 17, 2014 8:00 AM
Catawba Mountain (Rt. 311) to Daleville (Rt. 220)
113-Mile Hikes #3 & #4

19.2 miles; VERY Strenuous

\$2.00 carpool fee; 6 miles from Roanoke

Starts from the 311 parking lot on Catawba Mountain – only 15 minutes from Roanoke.

Certainly one of our most challenging hikes, it is recommended only for those in excellent physical condition. Almost 20 miles of the Appalachian Trail leads over varied terrain with several steep climbs and tricky footing in places. Highlights include McAfee Knob, Tinker Cliffs and Hay Rock. There are also numerous unnamed overlooks providing nice views of both the Catawba Valley and Carvins Cove

Linda King 540-342-2411

.....jennelleking@gmail.com

Mangala Kumar 540-389-0026

.....mangalakumar@aol.com

Monday May 19, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike

Contact hike leader for information.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896

.....Startover14@peoplepc.com

Saturday-Monday May 24-26 8:00 AM
Backpacking: Rockfish Gap to Tye River

30 miles; Strenuous

\$20.00 carpool fee; 85 miles from Roanoke plus long shuttle.

Day 1 will be a long day of driving and shuttling vehicles but a short day of hiking: we'll hike 5 miles from Rockfish Gap to Paul C. Wolfe Shelter. Day 2 we'll arise early and get started for a long day of hiking. We'll hike almost 16 miles to reach Maupin Field Shelter. Day 3 we'll finish our weekend with roughly 10 miles to Tye River where our car will be parked. We'll then have to drive back to Rockfish Gap to pick up our other car. This is for experienced backpackers only. Please also pack shelter: though our intent is to camp at shelters every night this plan may change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331

..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Saturday May 31, 2014 8:00 AM
Jenny Knob Work Hike

\$7.00 carpool fee; 70 miles from Roanoke

We will return to the far southern end of our section to repair a badly eroding section of trail south of Jenny Knob shelter. Additionally we will install water bars here and there as we hike in and out from the parking area on Route 611.

Dave Jones 540-552-3058

..... dhjones@together.net

Sunday June 01, 2014 7:00 AM
Babcock State Park

Roughly 13 miles dependent on group;

Moderate/Strenuous

\$17.00 carpool fee; 121 miles from Christiansburg Babcock State Park offers its guests 4127 acres of serene yet rugged beauty, a fast flowing trout stream in a boulder-strewn canyon and mountainous vistas to be viewed from several scenic overlooks. All of this variety is located adjacent to the New River Gorge National River and the heart of the whitewater rafting industry of West Virginia. This state park also includes a Grist Mill which we will make time to visit. This park has over 20 miles of trails so we'll try to hit all the major highlights throughout the day. Please note carpool is from Christiansburg.

Chris & Edward Wilson 757-202-3331

..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

Monday June 02, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike

We will be putting in steps and water bars and doing some side hill digging on the Trail. Contact hike leader for more specific details on location etc.

Jim Webb 540-562-8896

.....Startover14@peoplepc.com

Friday June 06, 2014 6:00 AM
High Falls (WV)

8.2 miles; Moderate

\$24.00 carpool fee; 170 miles from Roanoke

High Falls is one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the Monongahela and at an altitude of over 2800ft, one of the highest. The High Falls trail passes through old growth forest and large hemlock as it winds through the saddle on Shavers Mountain. This is a beautiful hike in the backcountry of the Monongahela National Forest. Please note this is a scouting hike: the hike leader has not previously completed this hike.

Chris Wilson 757-202-3331

..... theshoelesswanderer@gmail.com

**Saturday June 07, 2014 8:00 AM
Rock Castle Gorge**

11.0 miles; Strenuous

\$8.00 carpool fee; 57 miles from Roanoke

Located in Patrick County on Blue Ridge Parkway land. After a steep 2000-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.

Linda King 540-342-2411
.....jennelleking@gmail.com
Brendle Wolfe 540-968-2750
.....blwolfe@mail.roanoke.edu

**Saturday June 07, 2014 11:00 AM
Family Day at Beagle Ridge**

3 miles; Easy/Moderate

\$7.00 carpool fee; 50 miles from Christiansburg

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 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! Please note carpool is from Christiansburg

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

**Sunday June 08, 2014 8:00 AM
Mt. Rogers HQ to Groseclose**

11.5 miles; Strenuous

\$14.00 carpool fee; 87 miles from Roanoke

This hike is located in Smyth County near Marion. It is mainly a downhill hike on the AT starting from the ranger station on Route 16 to route 11 near Atkins. On the way to Atkins we'll pass by an old school house that has been turned into a museum.

Kris Peckman..... 540-366-7780

**Friday June 13, 2014 7:00 AM
Stone Mountain State Park**

Roughly 13.0 miles; Strenuous

\$14.00 carpool fee; 101 miles from Christiansburg

Stone Mountain is not immediately visible upon entering the park that bears its name but this magnificent 600-foot granite dome is well worth the wait. Sunlight and shadows dance across a broad tapestry of stone. White-tailed deer emerge from the security of the forest to graze on meadow grasses at the mountain's base. The scenery is only one attraction of the park. Mileage may vary depending on which trails the group wishes to do. Please note carpool is from Christiansburg.

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

**Saturday June 14, 2014 8:00 AM
Andy Layne Trail (Rt. 779) to McAfee
Parking (Rt. 311)
113-Mile Hike #4**

12.8 miles; Strenuous

\$2.00 carpool fee; 6 miles from Roanoke

We will start our hike at the Andy Layne Trail parking lot and work our way south to the McAfee's Knob parking lot on 311. Hike will start out with a three-mile ascent to Tinker Cliffs followed with some nice ridgeline descent. Then it's back up the trail to McAfee's Knob. Hike will take place rain or shine so bring appropriate gear.

Mike Hopkins..... 540-330-5271
.....mphoppy@gmail.com

**Saturday June 14, 2014 9:00 AM
Backpacking 101- Wytheville**

\$11.00 carpool fee; 80 miles from Roanoke

Have you always wanted to learn to backpack? Not sure where to get started? Not sure if you should bring that old Coleman lantern that's been passed down through three generations? Thinking Chef Boyardee is a great backpacking dinner? Then this event is for you! This event is for anyone looking to get into backpacking and is designed for those who have never backpacked before. More information can be gained from contacting the leader or checking out the Meetup event page. Please note leader will not be coordinating carpool but will help participants set one up.

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

**Sunday June 15, 2014 8:00 AM
Grayson highlands**

8.3 miles; Moderate
\$14.00 carpool fee; 102 miles from Roanoke
Circuit hike in the high country near Mt. Rogers.
Open meadows, waterfalls, forest, panoramic vistas.
Kris Peckman 540-366-7780

**Monday June 16, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Contact hike leader for information.
Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....**Startover14@peoplepc.com**

**Friday June 20, 2014 8:00 AM
Black Horse Gap (BRP) to Daleville (Rt. 220)
113-Hikes #1 & #2**

14.5 miles; Strenuous
\$2.50 carpool fee; 17 miles from Roanoke
The hike starts at Black Horse Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Botetourt County. This is the northern terminus of the 113-mile section of trail maintained by the RATC. The AT parallels the parkway heading south. It passes the Wilson Creek shelter and then crosses Salt Pond Road at Curry Gap. The trail then climbs Fullhardt Knob where there are limited views, then descends, crosses route 11 and ends on route 220 in Daleville.

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

**Sunday June 22, 2014 8:00 AM
Carvins Cove Trails**

10 miles; Strenuous
\$1.00 carpool fee; 6 miles from Roanoke
We will venture out on Comet, Jacobs Drop, Hemlock Tunnel, Araminta, Enchanted Forest, Riley's Loop and Songbird as a start. I'll have more detail closer to the hike date.
John Merkwan 540-904-2299

**Sunday June 22, 2014 9:00 AM
Backpacking 101- Salem**

Have you always wanted to learn to backpack? Not sure where to get started? Not sure if you should bring that old Coleman lantern that's been passed down through three generations? Thinking Chef Boyardee is a great backpacking dinner? Then this event is for you! This event is for anyone looking to get into backpacking and is designed for those who have never backpacked before. More information can be gained from contacting the leader or checking out the Meetup event page.

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

**Friday June 27, 2014 8:00 AM
Ribble Trail to Kimberling Creek (Rt. 606)
Hike #13 plus Dismal Falls**

7.8 miles; Strenuous
\$7.00 carpool fee; 50 miles from Christiansburg
Located in Giles County, this hike follows Dismal Creek for several miles. Much of the trail is lined with rhododendron. At 3.9 miles 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 where the A.T. goes over the creek on a footbridge. Please note carpool is from Christiansburg.

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

**Sunday June 29, 2014 8:30 AM
Catawba Mountain Work Hike**

No fee; meet at McAfee parking lot
We will make our quarterly visit to the trail up McAfee's Knob to rehabilitate the trail tread and make any necessary trail improvements.

Dave Jones 540-552-3058
..... **dhjones@together.net**

**Monday June 30, 2014 8:30 AM
Work Hike**

Contact hike leader for information.
Jim Webb 540-562-8896
.....**Startover14@peoplepc.com**

**Save the Date: July 12-13, 2014
Beginner Backpacking Trip**

Open only to those who have completed one of the Backpacking 101 classes.

More details will be given at the class.

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

**Save the Date: August 15-24, 2014
Backpacking Week Trip**

Spend a week on the trail, mark off some of those miles on the AT. We'll pick a section of trail to complete in these 7 days. Check the Meetup event for more information and to sign up.

Chris 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 Individual life membership	\$250.00 _____
Email _____	Family life membership	\$300.00 _____
Check here to save a tree and take only an e-Blazer <input type="checkbox"/>	Donation	\$ _____
Make checks payable to RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282	Amount Enclosed	\$ _____

*** Or go to ratc.org ***

Editor's Notes

Notice the new option on this form to read your Blazer in the online version. The eBlazer has three advantages: Our major expense is printing and mailing the Blazer. Trees are cut to produce the paper. And the pictures in the eBlazer are in living color. The printed Blazer will always be available. But if the eBlazer would work for you, just give Brendle (or Edward or Blanche or Bob) the word and she will set that up. And, if you change your mind, we will change you back.

The membership list is now maintained by our new membership coordinator, Brendle Wolfe. Please send any address, phone, spelling, etc., corrections to Brendle.

Also be aware of the year after your name on mailings. If it is less than the current year, you need to pay your dues.

If you want to know why I don't print your photos, it is because you didn't send them to me. You can email them as attachments, mail them on a flash drive or camera card (I'll send it back return mail), or send me a link to where it is posted on the web (I am trainable). Please share your photos.

<http://www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Appalachian-Trail-Club/> is the link to our meetup site. I just signed up and I love it. It's easy to do at ratc.org.

Bob Peckman

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



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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