

# TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Winter 2016

*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

### Annual Meeting Potluck

Saturday, March 12, 6:00 PM

Eat Great Food!

Approve Revised Bylaws

Elect Members of the Board

Walk the Jakobsweg in Germany

Christ Lutheran, corner of Grandin & Brandon

## WORK HIKES

Monday, January 11 - 8:30 AM

Monday, January 25 - 8:30 AM

Monday, February 8 - 8:30 AM

Monday, February 22 - 8:30 AM

Monday, March 7 - 8:30 AM

Monday, March 21 - 8:30 AM

## Hike Scheduling

Contact Bob Peckman

540-366-7780 – hikemaster@ratc.org

## BOARD MEETINGS

(All members are always welcome.

Please let the host know you plan to attend.)

Monday, January 18, 7:00 PM

*Hollins Branch Library*

Monday, February 15, 7:00 PM

*Hollins Branch Library*

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Please send dues, membership questions and anything having to do with money or member information to our treasurer, Blanche Brower, treasurer@ratc.org, PO Box 12282 Roanoke, VA 24024-2282, or phone her at 387-9732.

Tell her your new email address!

Payment is due January 1 of each year. If the date on your mailing label is less than 2016, you need to send Blanche a check, go to Paypal, or make some arrangements with Blanche.

For the sake of our sanity, we are going to drop members in arrears more than three months. Please pay your dues in January.

## Remembering Malcolm & Jimmie Black

Malcolm – stalks around the wood pile, axe in hand, doing his best to ignore Jimmie, hard to do – Jimmie right on his heels, focused, fussing, a set of scales in hand –

What's going on? Anticipating, she pounces on the log before he reaches it, weighs it, lets him have it. “Heart surgeon told him not to lift more than 10 pounds for six months” she chirps. “Stand back”, he growls. POW! A clean and powerful shot and the log splits asunder. Gaunt of frame with sinews honed to bands of steel by decades of serious gardening and miles and miles of side-hill, that would be Malcolm.

Their love of nature and for working outdoors attracted them early on to the trail club, and they were among the first to join the Mid-week Crew when it was formed in the late eighties.

Jimmie was a sturdy hiker and liked nothing more than to be out ahead clipping and raking and preparing the route for the diggers, and then at the end of the day producing a tasty snack for all to enjoy (must be a lady's talent, right Blanche?) .

Malcolm never seemed to tire, rarely drank water, never broke a sweat, collected gnarly old roots to make into snakes, had the curious habit of carrying out one or two pieces of flat rock whenever possible (was making a stone floor in his greenhouse, took years to complete). His vast knowledge of plants and wildflowers was legendary, making him a great resource for the crew.

In those early days we worked mainly in the old New Castle Ranger District. Things were much less formal in those days. We built our first bridge over Cove Branch. A sawyer came out from Blacksburg and dropped two tall oaks across the stream for stringers. Trouble was that they were 100 yards apart in rough terrain. It took us two days to line them up and from there on we sort of made things up as we went along. I have a beautiful little water-color of that bridge by Creston Stokes. Creston was an art student of

Malcolm's, later a life-long friend and also a well recognized painter throughout the Mid West. He would come to stay with the Blacks every fall to capture the color and loved to come out and work with us wherever we happened to be. So he helped with the bridge. Probably thought he had better paint it before it collapsed. I have the picture hanging in my study and it reminds me of Malcolm and our long years of friendship.

Malcolm was an accomplished painter too, creating both modern and conventional work. In our sun-room we have the modern version. It is a bird which looks

like a combination of a toucan and a school bus. In our family room we have the conventional version. It is a scene from the Smokeys and the trees look like trees and the mountains look like mountains and it is indeed a lovely picture.

It was always fun to visit Malcolm and Jimmie in their comfortable mountain home -with the pond in front with the turtle, and the tall trees around, and a summer garden bursting with color.

It was also fun to visit the high bright studio, (built for them by those clever boys of

theirs) to inspect the latest pottery creations, where the classical music was always playing.

Inside the house it was fun to watch the swirling goldfinch at their feeders through the picture window - to look around for what may have been added to the art and memorabilia which filled the house - and of course to hope for a nice sized piece of that wonderful cobbler you could smell baking in the oven. Perhaps the most fun of all though was the free-wheeling delightful conversations, and then, how so very proud they were of those children!

These are but slivers of memory, unfortunately already fading, and I suppose scant is their worth. Others will document the big things about Malcolm and Jimmie such as their remarkable service to The Nature Conservancy at Bottom Creek, and so on and on. This message is simple – they were lovely people who brightened the lives of everybody they met. We will miss them.



*Bill Gordge*

Malcolm Black died on August 1 and Jimmie joined him a little over a month later. Their son Kevin said they were always a team.

Malcolm and Jimmie spent their working years in Indiana, where Malcolm taught art. Upon retirement, they followed their sons Kevin and Karl to Bent Mountain, where their sons found and fixed up a house on a lovely wooded property with a pond view out of their front windows. Malcolm designed and built a beautiful garden and trails on the property. They hosted several of Malcolm's former students there.

Malcolm and Jimmie immediately became active members of RATC. Malcolm saved many small seedlings that would have been tossed aside when digging trail, and we have redbuds in our yard as a result. Corn Boils will never be the same without Jimmie's blackberry cobbler.

Jimmie was the talker of the two, but on one car drive with Malcolm alone, we discovered he, too, could hold his own in a conversation.

Malcolm knew and painted numerous wildflowers. I remember one hike up the Mau-Har Trail where he showed me more kinds of violets than I could keep track of. Their kitchen sink backsplash of tiles painted with wildflowers impressed us so much that we commissioned Malcolm to make one for our new house. Every time I stand at the stove, I see McAfee's Knob behind a field of wildflowers, and remember Malcolm. He also provided us with several rhododendrons and mountain laurel from their property for our yard, and a special double daylily.

As I prepare to go to the holiday dinner this year, I keep looking forward to seeing Malcolm and Jimmie, but they won't be there in person, only in spirit.

**Kris Peckman**

My first interaction with Malcolm was many years ago at the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society's Native Plant sale. He was the go-to man for information about the native plants. I would see him often at various conservation or environmental venues over the years. These last few years my husband, Scott, and I have been volunteering with The Nature Conservancy monitoring the Bottom Creek Gorge preserve, and the Blacks were present at our occasional Nature Conservancy meeting/gatherings to share information (and good food). We feel honored to have met

Malcolm and Jimmie and learned from them. They are treasured souls and our part of the world is a better place because of them.

**Laurie Spangler**

You cannot mention the Nature Conservancy's Bottom Creek Gorge Preserve without referring to Malcolm and Jimmie Black who were great stewards, story tellers and leaders. The preserve's overlook, with views of the second highest waterfall in Virginia, is named after Malcolm and Jimmie in honor of over 20 years of service to the preserve and the Conservancy. Malcolm and Jimmie were inspirations to countless other volunteers, Conservancy staff and hikers visiting the preserve. Upon "retiring" from volunteering at the age of 90, Malcolm used his artistic talents to make staff and other volunteers personalized coasters imprinted with wood grain from a tree that had fallen at Bottom Creek Gorge Preserve. Their love and dedication to the preserve will live on through all the people they touched during their lifetime.

**Jennifer Dalke**

I would run into Malcolm everywhere it seems. Of course, on pleasure or work hikes with RATC. But also, at a craft fair in the NRV where he was volunteering with children's activities. I would see him around town, such as at the bank. He was always even-keeled, welcoming, and genuinely glad to see me. He seemed to remind me of the spirit and presence of the late Andy Layne, I thought. He would always mention his wife even when she was not as present in later years. They will be missed.

**Bruce Sellars**

Obituary information collected by **Butch Kelly:**

Malcolm Black, of Bent Mountain, VA, died on August 1, 2015, at the age of 93. He was born December 5, 1921, in Clinton, Indiana, the first child of L.M. and Viola Nickel Black. Malcolm taught visual arts in the public schools in Indiana for 35 years. He married the love of his life, Jimmie Katherine James, on August 21, 1947.

He was a World War II veteran, having served in the Eighth Air Force, where he completed twenty-nine flights over enemy territory as a radio operator gunner in B17's.

In 1948, he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree from Indiana Central College, now the University of Indianapolis, and in 1949 received a Masters of Fine Arts from the Universidad Escuela de Bellas Artes in Mexico.





Upon retiring, he and Jimmie moved to Bent Mountain. Retirement allowed him to be actively involved in environmental projects with the Appalachian Trail Club, The Nature Conservancy, Roanoke Greenways, and craft work with the Virginia Mountain Craft Guild.

As an active members of the "Wednesday Crew" of the Appalachian Trail Club, they and others spent many an hour digging and hauling dirt and rocks to repair and build trails throughout the Roanoke Valley.

When they were not working on trails they were monitoring the Nature Conservancy's Bottom Creek Gorge.

The plant sales of our own BRWS will never be the same. We could always depend upon Malcolm and Jimmie to bring plants. He would bring free tree



seedlings for the children who attended the sale. They loved nature and enjoyed sharing it with others. Malcolm and Jimmie will surely be missed by all.

Malcolm and Jimmie Black are survived by their sons, Kevin Black of Bent Mountain, VA, Karl (Jean) Black of Boones Mill, VA and daughter, Marsha (Sam) Allen of Bettendorf, Iowa.

Many years ago Malcolm gave me a selection of music so that I could make a CD to be used at his service. Death was not something Malcolm did not know how to deal with. But he spent his time dealing with life, life to the fullest. He and Jimmie shared every bit of it together. There will be a celebration of both their lives when the daffodils are in bloom. If you want me to notify you, please drop a note to [editor@ratc.org](mailto:editor@ratc.org) or give me a phone call at 366-7780.

**Bob Peckman**

## PATC's maps covering the GWNF's Pedlar District

As a member of both the RATC and the PATC, I'd like to convey an important map update to RATC members. I am a member of the PATC's Maps Committee, and for the past two years have been extensively involved in updates to trail maps covering the Pedlar District of George Washington National Forest, including the Appalachian Trail. Map 12 covers the area just south of Shenandoah National Park, from Rockfish Gap to the Tye River, and Map 13 covers from the Tye River south into the Jefferson National Forest south of the James River. Each of these maps constitute comprehensive revisions, as outlined below. The PATC has a long history of producing trail maps in these areas. Both areas were first covered in a single

1933 map that covered Rockfish Gap to Lee Highway just north of Roanoke. In 1948, the second edition covered a smaller area, from Rockfish Gap to the James River, the area now covered by both Maps 12 and 13. This area was split into the present two maps in 1975 and this coverage continues to this day, with the printing of Map 12's 12<sup>th</sup> Edition and Map 13's 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.

*The best way to make sure that you have the newest versions is to go to the PATC's website, at <http://www.patc.net> and click on "our store" near the top of the page.*

**Jeff Monroe**

## Hikemaster's Report

I am going to try something different in the hike descriptions. The difficulty rating of hikes has been a combination of distance and terrain. That does not work when the distance is long and the terrain is challenging. In this schedule the terrain will be rated as easy, moderate or strenuous regardless of the length. A 15-mile greenway hike will be rated 15 miles, easy terrain and Dragon's Tooth will be rated 5.2 miles, strenuous terrain. A few of John Merkwon's and David Horst's hikes will get ratings like 12 miles, challenging terrain. If that is intimidating to us, maybe

it should be. We all have a right to go on any hike we want and will not be left behind if we are trying. (And trying does not mean over-exerting and putting ourselves in jeopardy.) But we should avoid hikes far beyond our comfort zone and progress only slowly and steadily to more difficult hikes.

I want to thank all of those who have stepped up to the plate to lead hikes on the schedule and also thank those who have filled in the schedule with last-minute hikes on Meetup. (I am anticipating one of those when the Cascades freezes over!) Where the schedule falls

short is in assistant hike leaders. The job of assisting is far easier than leading. Just having someone handle the sign-up list while the leader puzzles out the car pool can help a hike be successful.

Some leaders have lamented that some hikers show up without sufficient water, food, shoes, and physical preparation. Leaders, you can prevent that by listing your phone number as the meeting place and interviewing hikers who are not familiar. Leaders have not only the right, but also the obligation to turn away someone inadequately prepared with equipment or fitness.

The hike sign-up sheet is a release form and protects leaders and the club from lawyers. It also provides the names for hike reports, so please print your name so the editor doesn't have to research who you are. I have not been providing those as I should but they are

available at ratc.org-Resources in the black line near the top-RATC Documents, then Hike Sign Up Sheet about halfway down. I will try to do a better job in the next quarter. Hikes that are not in the Blazer schedule need the sign-up sheet just as well for the same reasons. Please email copies of the sheets to blazer@ratc.org or snail-mail them to me at 8131 Webster Dr, Roanoke, VA 24019

I am enjoying hike scheduling. Not that I wouldn't give it up in a heartbeat to concentrate on the Blazer, or give up the Blazer to concentrate on being a better hikemaster. You can volunteer to apprentice or to take over either of them at any time during the year.

I am always indebted to Ralph Burgio who raised the bar for the Blazer and whose footprints are still all over the Blazer to this day.

**Bob Peckman**

## Welcome New Members

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club welcomes the following new members:

<i>Randall Adams</i>	<i>Mike Faya</i>	<i>Carolyn McCain</i>	<i>Robert &amp; Margaret</i>
<i>Bruce Agnew</i>	<i>Beth Finnell</i>	<i>Chris Means</i>	<i>Salter</i>
<i>Debbie Aliff</i>	<i>Curry Fisher</i>	<i>Mark Milberger</i>	<i>Paul &amp; Ronda</i>
<i>Ruben Avagyan</i>	<i>Jennifer Fogel</i>	<i>Sally Noble</i>	<i>Timmermann</i>
<i>Joe Berney</i>	<i>Jonathon Giuffria</i>	<i>Steven Palmer</i>	<i>Sarah Ulrich</i>
<i>John Boatwright</i>	<i>Todd Gloede</i>	<i>Kelly Pawlak</i>	<i>Heather Vogel</i>
<i>Brian Boggs</i>	<i>Jonathan Harris</i>	<i>Martha Pillow</i>	<i>Cathy Walters</i>
<i>Edward Byron</i>	<i>Hilda Jackson</i>	<i>Tim Pohlad-Thomas</i>	<i>Eric West</i>
<i>Rhonda D. Case</i>	<i>Julie Janoff</i>	<i>Nancy Reid</i>	<i>Marlyse Whitaker</i>
<i>Sandra Collins</i>	<i>Robin Jordan</i>	<i>Dan &amp; Tammie</i>	<i>Leonard &amp; Chris</i>
<i>Denis Daly</i>	<i>Scott Karns</i>	<i>Rudder</i>	<i>Yates</i>
<i>Caralee Eicher</i>	<i>Gary Lee</i>		<i>Jessica McCallum</i>

And we welcome back:

<i>John Birckhead</i>	<i>Jennifer Pfister</i>
<i>George Golder</i>	<i>George &amp; Donna Repa</i>

The following made a donation to RATC:

<i>Ruben Avagyan</i>	<i>Bruce Sellars</i>
<i>Jim Overholser</i>	<i>Susan Terwilliger</i>
<i>Maurice Turner</i>	<i>gave for Bill Lamson.</i>

The following donated to RATC in memory of *Jimmie or Jimmie and Malcolm Black*:

<i>Mervin &amp; Blanche Brower</i>	<i>Wanda James</i>	<i>Maurice Turner</i>
<i>Don &amp; Barb Dowd</i>	<i>Melva James</i>	
<i>Bill &amp; Buzz Gordge</i>	<i>Janna &amp; John Rice</i>	

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

**Brendle Wolfe**

## Hike Reports

### Saturday, September 5, 2015 8.00 am St. Mary's River

Maya Bohler (leader), Kathy Arrington, Renee Belliveau, Amar Kumar, Carolyn McPeak, Cynthia Munley, Julie Petruska, Nancy Reid



If you think this water is cold, you are right! By Bohler

A very congenial group of 8 showed up for this hike (2 people cancelled last minute because of a power outage due to the heavy thunderstorm the night before). The traffic on Rte. 81 was light on this Saturday morning, and we made good time to the trailhead. We started our hike while the weather was still misty, with a quick sprinkle of rain. Early on we ran into some campers who had spent the night in the woods, and we learned from them that there had only been a little rain. This was lucky for us, as it made the stream crossings manageable since the water level of the river was still low. Everybody managed the 6 crossings to the St. Mary's Falls beautifully.

At the Falls, we crossed the river and scrambled up above the waterfall where the trail continues. We passed a camp and smoking fire hidden away above the stream, obviously illegal since there is no camping permitted in this area. After exploring the upper part of the Falls for a short distance, we turned back and settled down on the rocks for a picnic. Some of us took a plunge into the great waterhole deep and wide enough to swim a few strokes. We also watched some young hikers jump from the ledge above the swimming hole. The weather was perfect and the water not too cold, a very pleasant way to spend an hour or more. Once everybody had their fill of sunbathing and swimming, we hiked back to the parking lot.

### Sunday, September 6, 2015 Carvins Cove

Brian Batteiger (leader), Karen Callahan, Georgia Shaurette, Dee Case, Ben Shearrer, Janine Underwood, Catherine Cotrup, Ken Myers, Jim Beeson, and John from Charlottesville



By Batteiger

Weather was nice with a little threat of rain later in day. We started at around 8:15 and finished around 1pm. I was hoping we would see bear as we see them all the time when biking. But we missed out on that. We only saw some deer and squirrels. There were a lot of comments about how nice the trails were and the fact that it was a welcome change to have a 10-mile hike without much climbing. We stopped for a snack break on the large rock next to Song Bird trail. That is when John caught up to us. He had gotten a late start from Charlottesville this morning. Some did find the technical rock features on the Rattlin' Run trail to be a bit of a challenge. The parking lot was totally packed when we got back. Even so, we did not see that many people on the trail. We just saw mountain bikers and had good interactions with all. We did see two 6-year-old kids biking on Song Bird with their parents. They seemed to be having fun. There were a few people in the group that mentioned they would be interested in a hike at Devil's Marble Yard. Thanks to Jim for being the sweep on this hike!



**Sunday, September 13, 2015  
Read Mountain**

Fred Walters (hike leader), Carl Cornett, Ivy Lidstone, Kathy Arrington, Nancy Reid, Janani Raiman, Connie Fulmer, Kathleen Riordan, Amy Thomasson, Katie Fiorentino, Caralee Eicher, Melinda Reams, Andrew Reams



by Walters

The only way to describe this day was WOW! Sunny, temperature in the mid 70's with a nice breeze, more like fall than summer. There were 13 people on this hike plus 3 well-mannered dogs. We hiked about 5 miles in 3 hours. It was a very leisurely pace and we stopped frequently to discuss several topics including local geology, tree species and trail construction on this beautiful trail. To sum up – a good hike on a good day with a great group of hikers!

**Monday, September 14, 2015  
Workhike - McAfee Knob Trail**

Kathryn Herndon, Susan Powell, Jeff Edwards, Travis Stanley, Dave Horst, Jim Beeson, Terry Shipley, Dave Youmans, Jim Webb

Removed an old decaying bridge that carried hikers over the runoff from the spring near the Catawba shelter. Since the spring dried up a couple of years ago, there is no more runoff. We replaced the bridge with log and rock cribbing. We also repaired a couple of rock steps that erosion had made difficult to use.

**Saturday, September 19, 2015 8:30 AM  
Sharp Top**

Fred Meyer (leader), Jim Constantin, Amy Thomasson, Ted Byron, Alanna McWilliams, Peggy Overstreet, Hilda Morris

This was a wonderful day for a great hike that featured a 360 view at the top. This is an especially popular hike on the weekend and we passed many people going up and down. We also enjoyed a visit to Buzzard's Roost. It is somewhat of a steep climb up and down but the extensive view is very rewarding.

**Monday, September 21, 2015 8:30 AM  
Workhike**

Rained out

**Saturday, September 26, 2015 8:30 AM  
Boy Scout Loop**

Rained out.

**Monday, September 28, 2015 8:30 AM  
Workhike**

Rained out

**Sunday, October 4, 2015 1:00 PM  
Buffalo Mountain**

Cancelled because of weather.

**Sunday, October 4, 2015 1:00 PM  
Roanoke River Greenway from Bridge St**

Cancelled because of mud.

**Wednesday, October 7, 2015 9:00 AM  
Cove Mountain Loop**

Jeff Monroe (leader), Maya Bohler, Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Jeff Edwards, Julie Petruska, Madeleine Taylor, Steve Bowles, Dawn Lamb, Barbara Martin, Nancy Reid, Brian Boggs, and dogs Kent (dog leader), Gracie, and Sassy (dog sweep)

A dozen hikers converged on Jennings Creek Road near Arcadia at 9:45 on a spectacular Wednesday morning to climb Cove Mountain. The group included 10 RATC members, one PATC member, and a hike leader who is a member of both organizations (double leader credits!). The original trail loop direction was reversed because we wanted to front-load any stream crossings after 40 days of constant rain. But we did not need to worry – stream crossings were managed easily.

The group climbed 1500 feet over the first 2.75 miles on the Little Cove Trail to its end at the Appalachian Trail, where all paused to enjoy the high point of the hike. Once on the A.T., the trail dropped until the group reached the Cove Mountain Shelter, where all stopped for lunch and

several marveled at the brand new privy constructed by the good folks with the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club.



by Monroe

After lunch the descent continued, and the group passed a couple of trail maintainers from the NBATC – one of whom stated, “I don’t like to hike, I just like to maintain trails,” as he slowly made his way up the mountain. The group also talked with a section hiker from Villa Park, Illinois who is hiking from Harpers Ferry to Georgia. Unfortunately, that same hiker did not help our group’s sweeper continue on the right trail, when the last two hikers came to the confusing A.T./Glenwood Horse Trail intersection. The group also picked up a hiker from Michigan, who said her legs were “wobbly” on the ascent and wanted to have company returning to Jennings Creek Road.

Everyone marveled at how lucky they were to be out hiking on such a spectacular day.

**Sunday, October 11, 2015 8:00 AM**  
**Curry Gap (BRP) to Daleville**

Fred Meyer (leader), Brendle Wolfe (assistant), Dee Case, Karen Callahan, Lori Wimbush, Carina Hughes, and Anna Delgado

The Blue Ridge Parkway was foggy but we enjoyed the early colors of leaves along Salt Pond Road where it connects to the AT. We encountered 2 very interesting cobwebs which were unusually large. Along the way we met a couple from New Zealand who had started in Maine and were walking to Georgia. As we passed Fullhardt Knob, the weather became very windy but by the time we crossed Route 11, the wind was calm and we enjoyed wonderful views as we went up a hill through private land.

**Sunday, October 11, 2015 1:00 PM**  
**Roanoke River Greenway**

Georgia Gallaher & Linda Akers (leaders), plus 4 other hikers - apology for not getting the names

We met in the parking lot at Vic Thomas Park and I drove everyone to the 13th Street Greenway parking lot. It was a warm and sunny day perfect for an urban hike. Halfway through we stopped at HITS for ice cream. Good way to have a hike. Farther along the greenway traffic got heavy and we had to be careful of bikes. Everyone had lots of fun and good conversations

**Monday, October 12, 2015 8:30 AM**  
**Workhike**

Rained out

**Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:30 AM**  
**Terrapin Mt - Reeds Creek Loop**

Report next time.

**Saturday, October 17, 2015 10:00 AM**  
**Tinker Creek Greenway**  
**Hollins to Boat Launch**

Jimbo and Mary Harshfield (leaders), Jim Constantin, Ted Byron, Julie Janoff

This 5.5-mile hike followed the Tinker Creek Greenway from the Hollins trailhead parking lot to the Carvins Cove picnic area and back. After following the trail through the woods and up to a ridge, we crossed over into Carvins Cove and followed the gradually sloping trail down to the water. The views of the reservoir were magnificent along this trail, especially on this sunny fall day. We enjoyed our lunch and lots of good conversations in the picnic area near the water. Although sunny, it remained quite cool and some of us realized that we need to get warm hats and gloves out for our next hike on a cold day.

**Sunday, October 18, 2015 8:00**  
**Two for the Price of One**  
**Potts Mountain Trail**

**Allegheny Trail to Observatory, Peters Mtn.**

Dan Phlegar (leader), Chris Means (assistant), Kris Peckman, & Kathy Phlegar

We met at the Salem Park-n-Ride around 9:00 AM, however Chris Means was missing in action because he by habit met at the Orange Market. There was no problem because we met up OK and this allowed us to give him a hard time. We hiked first to the bird observatory and got there before incoming crowds. We saw three bald eagles and several red tail hawks. The weather was cold and windy, but no problem. From there we went to the Potts Mountain Rail Trail where I gave a brief history of the old railroad. The railroad was constructed in 1909 and went from the New River to Paint Bank. The railroad construction was quite an accomplishment because of the steep grades and rough terrain, which required several high trestles of 100 feet or more. The railroad was dismantled in



1932 once timber was harvested. If you like history and want to either hike or mountain bike, I recommend to take this leisure trip. The open forest vegetation was spectacular with the fall colors.



Dan, Kathy, Kris & Chris



Chris by Kris

**Sunday, October 18, 2015 1:00 PM  
Mill Mountain – Woodthrush Trail**

Dave Sutton (leader) Linda Sutton, Georgia Gallaher, and Linda Akers.

This hike was chosen to coordinate with the Go Festival or Roanoke Outdoor Festival, if hikers were interested. It was a great day to hike the Thrush Trail as we were all eager to get movin'. With plenty of newly fallen leaves already on the ground, it was a crunchy walk up the mountain side. We shared the trail with several mountain bikers enjoying the outdoors as well. Good hike that was enjoyed by all.

**Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:30 AM  
Rattlin Run - AT - Sawmill Branch Loop**

Report next time

**Saturday, October 24, 2015 1:00 PM  
Carvin's Cove from Bennett Springs**

Jean Warren (leader), Pat Cousins, Georgia Gallaher, Julie Janoff, Susan Cowdrick, Caryl Connolly

What a beautiful fall day! Cloudy and a little cool but it was perfect to see all the colors of the season. We started from the parking lot (packed full of cars) and hiked down the trail of Hotel and turned onto Buck. We stopped at the dry creek for a break, which was a great time to get to know each other. Susan is relatively new to the area and told us of her trip around the world. Caryl, not to be outdone, said she'd recently returned from Iceland to see the Northern Lights. What a great group! We did meet several bikers along the way and stood in awe of how fast they can race down a hill without falling off. Much rather be hiking! We returned to the parking lot on the same trail.

**Sunday, October 25, 2015 8:00  
Rock Castle Gorge**

Cancelled – Trail closed by Storm Damage

**Sunday, October 25, 2015 1:00 PM  
Mill Mountain Loop**

Sue Scanlin (leader), Kathy Arrington with Luna (dog), and Jeanne Duddy

Saturday evening it looked like it would be a solo hike for the leader after the only caller cancelled. Not so: not only did two 'surprise' hikers show up but the predicted rain didn't. A win-win result and it made for a very nice afternoon.



Jeanne and Kathy

by Scanlin

The fall colors were fantastic, and once we were at the Star, the sky was so clear that we could see way beyond McAfee and Tinker. When we had taken enough pictures, conversations were ongoing and we could get to know each other better. Jeanne had quite some local history stories to tell along the way and Luna seemed to enjoy our outing, too.

**Monday, October 26, 2015 8:30 AM  
Trail Relocation - Pearisburg**

Mike Vaughn, Dave Horst, Jeff Edwards

Worked on the relocation of the trail along a steep section overlooking beautiful downtown Pearisburg. Involved cribbing with large rock.

**Sunday, November 1, 2015 8:00 AM  
Catawba Mtn (311) to Trout Creek (620)**

Linda Conner (leader), William Conner, Dee Case, & Kris Peckman

We began the hike with cloudy skies and threatening rain; however, the rain was a mere short sprinkle and the rest of the day was beautiful. Most of the fall color had faded but there were some maple trees still putting on quite a show. The brilliant red-orange of their leaves was a striking contrast to the brown-grey of the surrounding trees. Kris gave a demonstration on how to climb to the approach to the tooth. We followed and enjoyed the wonderful views. We finished the hike as the day was ending and skies were getting dark. Our car was a most welcome sight.



Kris showing the way up

L. Conner

**Sunday, November 1, 2015 9:00 AM  
Carvins Cove Lakeside Trail**

Richard Kurshan & David Jones (leaders), Karen Wright, Julie Janoff, Georgia Shaurette & Jeannie LaRose

**Wednesday, November 4, 2015 8:00 AM  
Goshen Pass - Jump Rock Loop**

It was a David-Horst hike – Tough but good – ed.

**Saturday, November 7, 2015 1:00 PM  
Mill Mountain Trails**

Jimbo Harshfield (leader), Nancy Reid

This hike was scheduled on Meetup, and the RSVP=yes count was down to four by Saturday morning. Saturday began with a slowly increasing drizzle, enough to scare off some non-hearty hikers. When another dropped off Saturday morning, I tried to poll the hikers for a reschedule. There was no answer, so I therefore showed up and found only one other hiker willing to brave the rain. Nancy and I hiked around Mill Mountain. After a half hour, the rain ceased, and we were left with a very nice hike through vivid fall colors and dark, rain soaked tree trunks. 'Twas beautiful.

We hiked from the Star trail parking, up the Star trail to the Monument trail, then right on Monument trail to Prospect Street, then up Prospect past the restored Mill Mountain toll booth to the Big Sunny Trail. Then up the Riser trail to the Fishburn Monument. We took the new (unnamed/red blaze) trail just south of the Monument down to the Wood Thrush trail. Finally, we took a left on the Wood Thrush trail back to the starting point.

**Sunday, November 8, 2015 8:00 AM  
Broad Run Mountain Loop**

Cancelled

**Monday, November 9-10 & 11, 2015 8:30 AM  
Trail Relocation – Pearisburg**

Mike Vaughn, Jeff Edwards, Jim Webb, Dave Horst, Ralph Roberts. Also from the ATC, Josh Kloehn, Kathryn Herndon & Travis Stanley.

Due to rain, we moved the date to 11/10 and 11/11. We continued to work on this very difficult relocation. Sidehill digging and rock work to rebuild some of the trail dug 5-6 years ago.

We are trying to get this section opened for the 2016 season without Konnarock crew coming back for 1 more year.



**Sunday, November 15, 2015 8:00 AM  
Cascades to Butt Mountain**

Linda Conner and David Jones (leaders), William Conner, Bob Peckman, Julie Petruska, Susan Terwilliger, Karen Callahan, Val Dymond, Arietta Fleming



From Butt Mt

Conner

No matter the season, this hike never disappoints. Due to recent rains, Stony Creek and The Falls were full and beautiful. We visited the upper falls before continuing to Barney's Wall and on to Butt Mountain lookout. The views from both these areas are breathtaking. The amount of trash left along the fire road to Butt Mountain, however, is not breathtaking but rather disappointing. David Jones came prepared with trash bags and we gathered as much as the bags would hold. Great weather, beautiful hike and wonderful hiking friends make for an outstanding day.

**Sunday, November 15, 2015 1:00 PM  
Tinker Creek Greenway from 13th St**

Georgia Gallaher (leader) and Zetta Campbell

It was a very nice walk and beautiful day with lots of great conversation.

**Saturday, November 21, 2015, 1:00 pm  
Carvins Cove area at Bennett Spring**

Jean Warren (Leader), Jim Constantin, David Robinson, Julie Janoff, Rita Krasnow, Donna Repa

What a beautiful day - fifty-five degrees, sunny, and a breeze blowing. We met at the Orange Market and then carpooled to the Bennett Spring Parking Lot. We began walking on the Hi-Dee-Hoe trail and then veered left onto the Four Gorge trail. Because of the recent rains, the dry creeks were running, adding a few mini-waterfalls. The downed leaves created some heavy places to walk but it also made for better views of the deep gorges and nearby mountains. We saw quite a few bikers and each time they approached, we stood to the side, giving out whoops and

hollers and clapping, while they zoomed by us. We also saw several groups of people on horseback but had the good sense not to give them the same applause. We made a loop of this hike by returning on the Carvins Cove Road, which is quite picturesque with the beautiful homes, rolling hills, and the horses and donkeys watching us go by. It was a wonderful day with wonderful company!

**Sunday, November 22, 2015 7:00 AM  
Rich Hole Wilderness North**

John Merkwan (leader), Maya Bohler, Kris Peckman, and Sherri Custer

This hike did not go exactly as planned. The brush had grown back with a vengeance over last year delaying us on the first half of the hike. This delay would have had us finishing in the dark had we continued on the Simpson Creek portion so we hiked out to the blacktop and hitched a ride. As it was we still had 8 1/2 miles of adventure in the forest. Maya said it best on her Meetup post. "I enjoyed this challenging hike very much. The views were spectacular, and our small group very congenial. I was not unhappy to skip the 15 stream crossings although you prepared us well with the plastic boot covers you provided so kindly. And the ride in the pickup truck at the end was a godsend. Thanks for showing us another beautiful, wild part of Virginia."

**Monday, November 23, 2015 8:30 AM  
Trail Relocation – Pearisburg**

Mike Vaughn, John Miller, Jim Beeson, Jeff Edwards, Dave Horst, Jim Webb and Steven.

It was hard work with pick and sledge hammer to cut the trail thru limestone rock. The ATC's large hammer drill was in the shop for repairs this week so it was hard going. It looks like only a few more days and we will be able to open this #&^%ing thing up.

**Sunday, November 29, 2015 8:00 AM  
Black Horse Gap (BRP) to Daleville (Rt. 220) 113-Hikes # 1 & 2**

Homer & Therese Witcher (leaders), Carina Hughes, Julie Petruska, Jim Beeson, Kevin Witcher, Brenin Witcher, Maria Bowling and Sumner

We had a beautiful day for a hike, especially considering it was the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Since there were no leaves on the trees, we had multiple good views as we walked on the trail. The water was flowing well at both Wilson Creek and Curry Creek. Great weather, nice hike and good company.



**Sunday, November 29, 2015 1:00 PM**

**Lick Run Greenway**

Mervin (leader) & Blanche (assistant) Brower, Scott & Laurie Spangler

The hike started from the parking lot at mile 1.6 on the greenway and went to Target at the shopping mall. The new pedestrian bridge across 581 is a very nice approach into the mall and a big improvement over walking next to all the traffic on the old way. We took a break in Target and then walked back to the parking lot.

**WednesdayFriday, December 2- 4, 2015 9:00 AM**  
**Sprouts Run - Pine Mountain Loop**

David Horst (leader), Jeff Edwards, Steve Bowles, Maria Bowling, Nancy Reid, Madeleine Taylor, Maya Bohler, Mary Harshfield, Bob Peckman and Sassy & Sumner

Another great, in EVERY way, David Horst hike. We hiked it in reverse so the cold-water waders would not suffer too much. – ed.

**Saturday, December 5, 2015 8:00 AM**

**The Peaks of Otter  
Flat Top and Sharp Top**

Hugh Hall (leader), Madeleine Taylor (and dog Sassy), Jim Constantin, Karen L. Major, Heidi Scherzer, Janani Raman, Georgia Shaurette, Grace Niu

We met four members of the group at the Peaks of Otter Lodge. The restaurant and lodge were closed until December 11 for renovation so the restrooms were locked. We dropped a vehicle so we could hike the entire Flat Top Trail. Jim shared his experience of spending six weeks in Rwanda, Africa during the summer on a mission trip. We hiked Flat Top in the morning, ate lunch at the summit and enjoyed the view. Four hikers remained to tackle Sharp Top in the afternoon. We saw a number of Liberty University students along the trail. This was a full day (ten hours) but great fun, exercise, and companionship. We were late getting home which made it difficult for us to attend the Potluck dinner at Christ Lutheran.

**Hike Schedule**

**<http://www.meetup.com/Roanoke-Appalachian-Trail-Club/#calendar>**

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.

Hike in this schedule are rated by length and terrain so hikers can evaluate them based on their individual strengths.

Easy terrain – Greenways or old roads

Moderate terrain – steeper trails such as McAfee's

Strenuous terrain – long climbs and rough trails

Challenging – neglected trails and bushwhacking

Driving miles are from Roanoke unless otherwise stated. Shuttle lengths are included to calculate carpool fees. We encourage carpooling to reduce pollution and because trailhead parking may be limited.

**Friday, January 1, 2016 9:00 AM**  
**McAfee-Devil's Kitchen Potluck**

7.8 miles, moderate terrain

6-mile drive, \$0.50 carpool fee

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. Hike leaders should recommend that you don't come if you are not prepared with equipment or condition.**

**The club is always looking for experienced hikers to help lead club hikes. Uncle Bob Needs You! Please lead or assist for one or two hikes on the next schedule. Contact Bob Peckman at [hikemaster@ratc.org](mailto:hikemaster@ratc.org). For Blazer matters [blazer@ratc.org](mailto:blazer@ratc.org)**

Start the year out right. Beat the crowds! This is a potluck picnic. (Please label your contents so those with food problems can indulge with abandon.) We can devilishly make hot chocolate and soup out of the wind.

**Kris & Bob Peckman .....366-7780**  
**..... bob@peckmanjazz.com**

**Sunday, January 3, 2016 1:30PM**  
**Lick Run Greenway**  
**Valley View to Market & Back**

6 miles, easy terrain  
 No carpool fee

Hike the Lick Run Greenway bridge over 581 to downtown Roanoke. The group will regroup in the Market building for refreshments before the return trip. Meet next to Lick Run Greenway near Best Buy, Valley View.

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

**Saturday, January 9, 2016 9:00 AM**  
**Carvins Cove Trough-Gauntlet Loop**

6 miles, moderate terrain  
 2.6-mile drive, \$0.50 carpool fee, \$2 use fee

Start from the end of Timberview Rd. Straight ahead (NW) on the Horse Pen fire road. Immediate left (NW) onto the Trough Trail up to the ridgeline of Brushy Mt. Turn right (N) on the fire road to the Gauntlet Trail. Right (SE) down to the Horse Pen Fire road and right (SW) back to the cars.

**Maya Bohler** ..... **344-6588**  
 ..... **mayabohler@gmail.com**

**Sunday, January 10, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Broad Run Mountain Loop**

10.3 miles, challenging terrain.  
 12-mile drive, \$1.50 carpool fee

This hike is part ridge walk/bushwhack (4.7 miles) along the top of Broad Run Mountain and part abandoned forest service road (4 miles) plus a few other odds and ends making a 10.3-mile loop. Elevation challenges are moderate and no rock scrambling required but nearly half of this hike is off-trail so some minor brush may be encountered. I recently hiked this so brush report is up-to-date.

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

**Sunday, January 10, 2016 1:30 PM**  
**Lick Run Greenway**  
**Valley View to Market & Back**

6 miles, easy terrain  
 No carpool fee

Hike the Lick Run Greenway bridge over 581 to downtown Roanoke. The group will regroup in the Market building for refreshments before the return trip. Meet next to Lick Run Greenway near Best Buy, Valley View.

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

**Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Potts Arm - Cove Branch Loop**

9 miles, challenging terrain  
 25-mile drive, \$2 carpool fee

Moderate climbs through some overgrown trails, some difficult rock scrambling through rock fields and blow downs. In between the Shawvers and Barbour Creek Wilderness area in Craig County, the hike follows the long abandoned trail up to the top of Potts Arm before descending to Cove Branch. We will do an out and back up the branch to Potts Jeep Trail. Continuing down the branch back to the parking area, we go through a difficult 1.5 mile section of rock scrambling and blow downs. The remoteness and solitude of this area and the beauty of Cove Branch are what makes this special.

**David Horst** ..... **horstde@aol.com**  
 ..... **804-852-7653**

**Sunday, January 17, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**(7:00 Christiansburg)**  
**Daleville (220) to Andy Layne Trail (779)**  
**113-Mile Hike #3 plus Tinker Cliffs**

13.0 miles, strenuous terrain  
 0-mile drive, 11-mile shuttle, \$1.00 carpool fee

Starting from the Daleville Commuter lot, we begin with an 800-foot climb up Tinker Mountain and then go along a scenic ridge overlooking Carvins Cove. At the saddle, marked with a sign, we continue on up to the cliffs. Then we return to the saddle and turn down the Andy Layne trail to the parking lot on 779.

**Maria Bowling** ..... **540-239-2583**

..... **maria.bowling@gmail.com**

**Brendle Wolfe** ..... **540-968-2750**

..... **blwolfe@mail.roanoke.edu**

**Sunday, January 17, 2016 1:00 PM**  
**Fallingwater Cascades**

2.1 miles, moderate terrain  
 27-mile drive, \$2.50 carpool fee

Located in Botetourt County, this loop hike goes down a short, scenic trail to Fallingwater Cascades. This is a scenic stream just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. The trail will follow the stream for a short distance before ascending back to the trail head.

**Laurie Spangler** ..... **twospanglers@yahoo.com**  
 ..... **977-1881**

**Thursday, January 21, 2016 8:30AM  
James River Face Wilderness Loop**

7.7 miles, moderate terrain  
36-mile drive, \$3.50 carpool fee

This is one of the easier ascents to the James River Face Wilderness Area's highest points. The hike starts on the Petite's Gap Road trailhead and ascends gradually using the Sulphur Spring Trail, passing arguably the best viewpoint in the entire wilderness before reaching the Appalachian Trail near the end of the Piney Ridge Trail. The hike turns southbound on the Appalachian Trail, passing the site of the old Marble Springs Shelter, a shelter site on the A.T. dating back to 1933 before it was taken apart and rebuilt on Cove Mountain. Just further south, we will turn off of the A.T. onto an unmarked trail that is the original A.T. alignment in this area, personally scouted by trail pioneer Myron Avery. We hike back to the Petite's Gap Road and follow the road back 2 miles to our vehicles. Total ascent: 1300 feet. Roanoke hikers meet at Daleville Park-and-Ride at 8:30, and meet Charlottesville-based hike leader at trailhead at 9:30. Limited to 10 hikers due to wilderness regulations, though we could split into two groups if there is sufficient interest. Moderate.

**Jeff Monroe** ..... [monroejeff@gmail.com](mailto:monroejeff@gmail.com)  
**Kris Peckman** ..... 540-366-7780

**Sunday, January 24, 2016 9:30 AM  
Rock Castle Gorge**

11.0 miles, strenuous terrain  
50-mile drive, \$5.50 carpool fee

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. (Late news is that this hike will be more difficult due to storm damage.)

**Gary Oberlender** ..... 529-7566  
..... [gob3255@cox.net](mailto:gob3255@cox.net)  
**Karen Callahan** ..... 540-961-0640

**Sunday, January 24, 2016 1:30 PM  
Murray Run Greenway + Fishburn Park**

6 miles, easy terrain  
No carpool fee

We will walk the Murray Run Greenway from Virginia Western CC to Grandin Road, and return. This is the most natural trail of the Roanoke Valley Greenway system and will include the beautiful Murray Run Trail in Fishburn Park. There are some ups and downs but no long climbs.

**Linda Akers** ..... 774-4391  
..... [lakers4350@mail.com](mailto:lakers4350@mail.com)

**Monday, January 25, 2016 8:00 AM  
Apple Orchard Falls, Cornelius Creek Loop**

5.7 miles, moderate terrain  
26-mile drive, \$2.50 carpool fee

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

**Greg Edwards** ..... [outigo@gmail.com](mailto:outigo@gmail.com)  
**540-580-1541** ..... 966-1947

**Sunday, January 31, 2016 8:00 AM  
Pine Swamp (635) to Johns Creek (632)  
113-Mile Hike # 10**

13.2 miles, strenuous terrain  
62-mile drive, \$7.00 carpool fee

The hike is located in Giles County. From Stony Creek Valley we will climb 1,100 feet in one mile to the heavily wooded northern slope of Big Mountain. The trail winds through the 11,172-acre Mountain Lake Wilderness between Salt Sulphur Turnpike and the War Spur Shelter. Wind Rock on Potts Mountain provides the best viewpoint of the hike. Limited to 10 hikers due to wilderness regulations.

**Dave Socky** ..... 540-989-7693  
..... [sockyDR@cox.net](mailto:sockyDR@cox.net)  
**David Jones** ..... 540-552-3058  
..... [dhjones@together.net](mailto:dhjones@together.net)

**Sunday, January 31, 2016 8:00 AM  
Troutville (Rt 11) to Fullhardt Knob**

7.0 miles, moderate terrain  
No carpool fee

The hike is located in Botetourt County. This up-and-back Appalachian Trail hike begins at a small parking lot on Route 11 at the Troutville town limits. After crossing railroad tracks, hikers ascend a grassy hill with excellent views. The trail then crosses a road and begins the climb to Fullhardt Knob. We will return the same way.

**Linda King Conner** ..... 387-9528  
..... [JennelleKing@gmail.com](mailto:JennelleKing@gmail.com)  
**Laurie Spangler** ..... [twospanglers@yahoo.com](mailto:twospanglers@yahoo.com)  
..... 977-1881

**Sunday, January 31, 2016 1:30 PM  
Roanoke River Greenway – 13<sup>th</sup> St to Wasena**

10 miles, easy terrain  
No carpool fee

Starting from the parking lot at 13<sup>th</sup> St, we will walk on the greenway to Wasena Park. The old transportation museum building finally has a restaurant, the Green Goat. After a stop, we will return to our cars.

**Barbara Duerk** ..... [barbgary@cox.net](mailto:barbgary@cox.net)  
..... 343-1616



**Saturday, February 6, 2016 8:00 AM  
North Mountain Trail**

10.4 miles, strenuous terrain  
9-mile drive, 8.5-mile shuttle, \$2.00 carpool fee

The hike starts in Botetourt County and follows the border of Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke counties; it climbs North Mountain on the gently graded Catawba Valley Trail, which begins just opposite the Andy Layne Trail on Route 779. The rest of the hike is an up-and-down ridge walk, with views on both sides visible through the trees, finishing at Rt 311 near the Dragon's Tooth parking lot.

**Linda King Conner** ..... 387-9528  
..... [JennelleKing@gmail.com](mailto:JennelleKing@gmail.com)

**Saturday, February 6, 2016 1:30 PM  
Roanoke River Greenway  
Bridge St to Wasena**

4 miles, easy terrain  
No carpool fee

Meet at the parking lot on Bridge Street. We will explore the Roanoke River Greenway hiking East. Plan to bring your camera and money for refreshments at the River and Rail near the Green Goat in Wasena Park before returning to our starting point.

**Barbara Duerk** ..... [barbgary@cox.net](mailto:barbgary@cox.net)  
..... 343-1616

**Sunday, February 7, 2016 1:00 PM  
Mill Mountain Trails**

4.2 miles, moderate terrain  
No carpool fee

The moderate 4.2-mile hike will be Wood Thrush to Ridgeline to Monument to Star and back to the parking lot off Riverbank Rd.

**David Sutton** ..... 774-0648  
..... [dsutton24018@yahoo.com](mailto:dsutton24018@yahoo.com)

**Sunday, February 7, 2016 8:00 AM  
Sinking Creek to Lee Hollow  
113 Mile Hike #8**

10.4 miles, moderate terrain  
18-mile drive, 23-mile shuttle, \$4.00 carpool fee

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 farms. Several slanted rocks offer views of Craig Creek Valley and the mountains beyond.

**Homer & Therese Witcher** ..... 266-8912  
266-4849 ..... [witchers4@juno.com](mailto:witchers4@juno.com)

**Monday, February 8, 2016 8:00 AM  
Hoop Hole Upper Loop**

7.3 miles, moderate terrain  
28-mile drive, \$3.00 carpool fee

The hike is located in Botetourt County between Eagle Rock and Oriskany – some 45 minutes from Roanoke. This hike uses part of the lower loop to get to the upper loop, which includes a steep climb to the top of Montgomery Knob in the Jefferson National Forest.

**Greg Edwards** ..... [outigo@gmail.com](mailto:outigo@gmail.com)  
540-580-1541 ..... 966-1947

**Sunday, February 14, 2016 1:00 PM  
Bottom Creek Gorge**

5.3 miles, moderate terrain  
17-mile drive, \$2.00 carpool fee

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.

**Sue Scanlin** ..... [scanlin@verizon.net](mailto:scanlin@verizon.net)  
..... 989-0497

**Sunday, February 14, 2016 1:00 PM  
Lick Run Greenway Best Part**

4 miles, easy terrain  
No carpool

Park in the lot in Washington Park off Burrell St. Follow the Greenway to the new bridge over 581. Return to the cars.

**Georgia Gallaher** ..... 345-8700

**Thursday, February 18, 2016 8:00 AM  
White Rock Tower Trail**

9 miles, strenuous terrain  
45-mile drive, \$4.50 carpool fee

This trail starts on a road that accessed a former fire tower and now forms a boundary for the Rich Hole Wilderness, just off Interstate 64 west of Lexington. The road climbs steeply at times before reaching a ridge top with views west of the Cowpasture Valley and Griffith Knob in the Rough Mountain Wilderness. The trail follows the ridge for a while, ending at a point where the group can decide to follow the trail back to the parking lot or bushwhack a loop back to parking. Roanoke hikers meet at Daleville Park-and-Ride at 8:00, and meet Charlottesville-based hike leader at trailhead at 9:00. Details to follow for those signing up through Meetup. Total distance: about 8-9 miles. Total ascent: 2,870 feet.

**Jeff Monroe** ..... [monroejeff@gmail.com](mailto:monroejeff@gmail.com)

**Sunday, February 21, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Patterson/Price Mountains**

10 miles, challenging terrain

19-mile drive, short shuttle, \$2.00 carpool fee

The hike will start on the Patterson Mountain Trail with a steep ascent followed by a few saw teeth. It will then take a right down the Tucker trail to Patterson Creek Road where we will pick up the Kelly trail up to the Price Mountain Trail, followed by a right turn back to where it crosses Route 606. This will be about 10 miles of poorly marked rugged trail - what an adventure! We did this hike at this time in 2010 and scaled a few snow drifts on the Price Mountain Ridge.

**John Merkwon .....540-904-2299**

**Sunday, February 21, 2016**  
**Buffalo Mountain**

4.3 miles, moderate terrain

44-mile drive, \$4.00 carpool fee

Located in Floyd County in the vicinity of Mabry Mill, the hike goes to the summit of Buffalo Mountain with extraordinary views in all directions. The distinctive shape of Pilot Mountain in North Carolina is visible in the distance on a clear day. A network of unofficial trails lead to various points on the edge of the mountain's massive rock face.

**Carolyn McPeak .....[mcpeakcr@aol.com](mailto:mcpeakcr@aol.com)**  
**.....890-2855**

**Saturday, February 27, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Sinking Creek Valley to John's Creek Mtn Trail**

9.6 miles, moderate terrain

42-mile drive, \$4 carpool fee

We will take the AT south from Route 42 with views of Johns Creek Mtn and Sinking Creek Mtn. After crossing Laurel Creek, we will have a snack at Laurel Creek Shelter and then proceed to Kelly Knob and Johns Creek Mountain Trail. We may be able to see Salt Pond Mtn. We will turn around and return to 42.

**Fred Meyer .....[wfmeyer@suddenlink.net](mailto:wfmeyer@suddenlink.net)**  
**.....304-744-9219**

**Saturday, February 27, 2016 1:00 PM**  
**Carvins Cove Hi-Dee-Hoe/Four Gorges Trails**

3 miles, easy terrain

\$0.50 carpool fee, \$2/person use fee.

We will carpool to the Bennett Springs Parking Lot. We begin walking on the Hi-Dee-Hoe trail and then veer left onto the Four Gorge Trail. We make a loop of this hike by returning on the Carvins Cove Road, which is quite picturesque with the beautiful homes and rolling hills.

**Jean Warren.....384-6229**

**Sunday, February 28, 2016 1:30 PM**  
**Roanoke River Greenway West**  
**Bridge Street to Crystal Spring**

7 miles, easy terrain

No carpool, no shuttle

Out and back.

**Linda Akers .....774-4391**  
**.....[lakers4350@mail.com](mailto:lakers4350@mail.com)**

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Dody Ridge**

About 9 miles, strenuous terrain

15-mile drive, \$1.50 Carpool Fee

Located in Bedford County near Montvale, Dody Ridge has suffered a couple of fires at the north end in the past 10 years. This lends itself to great views of Roanoke and the valley to the south, the Blue Ridge to the west, and the Peaks and Apple Orchard Mountain to the northeast. On a really clear day, the Atlantic Ocean to the east and glimmers of the Arctic Ocean to the north can be seen. Ha! The hike follows an old stage coach route, passes the site of a 18th century tavern and live stock pond, passes through the Day Creek area, and ascends the ridge for several miles of ridge hiking. Midway along the ridge, we will do an out and back up an unnamed trail to the Great Valley Overlook. This will either be a loop hike or require a short car shuttle depending on whether the parkway is closed at that time.

**David Horst.....[horstde@aol.com](mailto:horstde@aol.com)**  
**.....804-852-7653**

**Saturday, March 5, 2016 10:00 AM**  
**McAfee Knob**

7.8 miles, moderate terrain

6-mile drive, \$0.50 carpool fee

Starting from the McAfee Parking lot on Rt 311, 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.

**Barbara Duerk .....[barbgary@cox.net](mailto:barbgary@cox.net)**  
**.....343-1616**

**Sunday, March 6, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**Lee Hollow (621) to Trout Creek (620)**

7.6 miles, moderate terrain

18-mile drive, 3-mile shuttle, \$2.00 carpool fee

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.

**Richard Kurshan** .....rmkurshan@gmail.com

**Sunday, March 6, 2016 1:00 PM**  
**Daleville (220) to Mountain Pass Rd (652)**

3.2 miles, easy terrain

No carpool

This hike will head north on the A.T., passing through woods and crossing Virginia Route 11 near Troutville. It will then ascend a hill to an open field which provides good views of the surrounding mountains.

**Merv & Blanche Brower** ..... 387-9732

..... mervin.brower@verizon.net

..... blanche.brower@verizon.net

**Thursday, March 10, 2016 8:00 AM**  
**St. Mary's Wilderness:**  
**Cellar Mountain/Cold Spring Trail Loop**

7.1 miles, challenging terrain

61-mile drive, \$6.00 Carpool fee

This is a wilderness loop over two trails that are now somewhat overgrown. Bring hand clippers to this hike, and we'll leave the trails in better shape! Start at the parking area for the Cellar Mountain Trail and climb steeply to near the summit of Cellar Mountain, with views into the St. Mary's Wilderness. The Cellar Mountain Trail climbs from about 2000 feet to 3500 feet over the first two miles of the hike. This trail ends at FR 162A, a high clearance forest road just outside of the wilderness, where it meets the Cold Spring Trail. The Cold Spring Trail drops steeply at first, then more gradually into a lush and wet canyon. The trail ends at a local landowner's property line, so the hike will bushwack within the wilderness boundary to a road, which we will walk 1.3 miles back to our cars. Hike distance: 7.1 miles. Total ascent: 1500 feet. Roanoke hikers can meet at the Daleville Park-and-Ride at 8 to carpool, then meet the Charlottesville-based hike leader at the parking area on FR 42 (Cold Springs Road) about a mile north of the St. Mary's Falls Trail parking, a little after 9:00 AM. Contact hike leader Jeff Monroe for further details.

**Jeff Monroe** ..... monroejeff@gmail.com

**Sunday, March 13, 8:00 am**  
**A.T.: Punchbowl to Long Mountain Wayside**

10.2 miles, moderate terrain

80-mile drive, \$8.00 carpool fee

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.

**Kris & Bob Peckman** .....366-7780

..... bob@peckmanjazz.com

**Sunday, March 13, 2016 1:00 PM**  
**Roanoke River Greenway, Bennington Trailhead**  
**(13<sup>th</sup> St) to Black Dog Salvage**

5.5 miles, easy terrain

No carpool, 0.5-mile shuttle, \$0.50 carpool fee

One way.

**Georgia Gallaher** .....345-8700

**Sunday, March 13, 2016 1:00 PM**  
**Chestnut Ridge Trail**

5.4 miles, easy terrain

No carpool

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.

**David Sutton** .....774-0648

..... dsutton24018@yahoo.com

**Monday, March 14, 2016 8:00 PM**  
**Cove Mountain Loop**

8.2 miles, strenuous terrain

23-mile drive, \$2.00 carpool fee

This hike starts by climbing the Appalachian Trail past Little Cove Mountain Shelter from the Jennings Creek Road, east of Arcadia, north of Buchanan. At 4.5 miles, we will leave the A.T. and descend on the Little Cove Mountain Trail 2.7 miles back to Jennings Creek Road. We will walk the road 0.8 miles back to our vehicles. Elevation at the start of the hike is 1000 feet, and the A.T. portion of the hike climbs much of the way, ascending to 2600 feet, meaning that this is a tough hike.

**Greg Edwards** .....outigo@gmail.com

**540-580-1541** .....966-1947



**Wednesday, March 16, 2016 8:00 AM  
Spec Mines**

About 8.5 miles, challenging terrain, some steep and off trail

15-mile drive, \$1.50 carpool fee

This lollipop route begins and ends on the BRP near the Montvale Overlook. We will take the Spec Mines Trail down to a forest service road before going off trail for 1.5 miles up a branch to explore the abandoned munitions buildings and iron ore mine. Continuing up the old rail path to an unnamed trail, we descend again to the FS road which takes us back to the Spec Mines trail for our ascent to the parking area. Bring a flashlight if you would like to go into the mine.

**David Horst** .....[horstde@aol.com](mailto:horstde@aol.com)  
.....804-852-7653

**Saturday, March 19, 2016 8:00 AM  
Crab Tree Falls and the Priest**

9.0 miles, strenuous terrain

66-mile drive, 4-mile shuttle, \$7.00 carpool fee

The hike is located in Nelson County, and follows Crabtree Creek, with scenic overlooks at the five major cascades, which have a total fall of 1,200 feet. After reaching the top of the falls, we will take a side trail to connect to the A.T. near the Priest shelter. We will then begin a 3,000-foot descent from the summit of the Priest back to Route 56 on the Tye River.

**Hugh Hall** .....725-8874  
.....[heelstar2000@yahoo.com](mailto:heelstar2000@yahoo.com)

**Saturday, March 19, 2016 1:00 PM  
Boy Scout Loop**

4 miles, moderate terrain

9-mile drive, \$1.00 carpool fee

Starting at the Dragon's Tooth Parking lot, we will take the Blue Blaze to the saddle and the AT intersection. Then we will go left on the AT, over Rawie's Rest to the Boy Scout Trail which is blazed yellow. We will follow the Boy Scout back to the Blue Blaze near the parking lot and back to the cars.

**Jean Warren**.....384-6229

**Sunday, March 20, 2016 8:00 AM  
Bluff City to Rice Field**

12.7 miles, moderate terrain

60-mile drive, \$6.00 carpool fee

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.

**Dave Socky**.....540-989-7693

.....[sockyDR@cox.net](mailto:sockyDR@cox.net)

**David Jones**.....540-552-3058

.....[dhjones@together.net](mailto:dhjones@together.net)

**Monday, March 21, 2016 8:00 AM  
Sprouts Run/Wilson Mountain Loop**

8.0 miles, moderately strenuous terrain

23-mile drive, \$2.50 carpool fee

This hike will combine the Sprouts Run Trail and the Wilson Mountain Trail in a loop with a connection of a .9 mile Forest Service Road. Sprouts Run offers creek-side walking with some beautiful pools of water and cascading waterfalls. It also has some very large trees along the way. Wilson Mountain is mostly ridge walking with views of the James River and the Solitude Valley.

**Greg Edwards**.....[outigo@gmail.com](mailto:outigo@gmail.com)

540-580-1541 .....966-1947

**Saturday, March 26, 2016 8:00 AM  
Sunset Field to Petites Gap**

7.3 miles, moderate terrain

35-mile drive, 7-mile shuttle, \$4.00 carpool fee

This hike will be on the A.T. from the Sunset Field overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway to Petites Gap on the BRP. This hike has wonderful views from Thunder Ridge Overlook and Apple Orchard Mountain, which has a large grassy bald at its summit. This route is also known for the Guillotine, a rock formation, where the trail passes under a suspended rock. There is also a beautiful series of over 100 rock steps installed by the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club along the trail immediately past the Guillotine.

**Chris Means**.....540-537-7433

.....[meanzy11@gmail.com](mailto:meanzy11@gmail.com)

**Sunday, March 27, 2016 1:30 PM  
Mill Mountain – Woodthrush Trail**

3.2 Miles, easy terrain

No Carpool Fee

Meet at the Star Trail Parking lot, 1208 Riverland Road, Roanoke. Hike is out and back.

**Linda Akers** .....774-4391

.....[lakers4350@mail.com](mailto:lakers4350@mail.com)

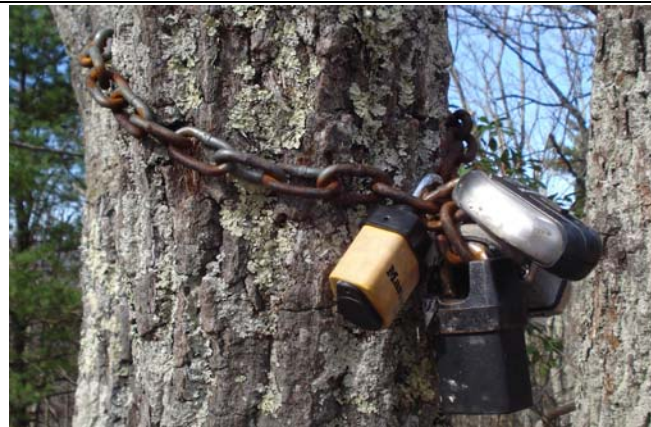
**Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club  
Potluck Banquet & Business Meeting**

Saturday, March 12, 6:00 PM  
Christ Lutheran Church, Grandin & Brandon

Business: Elect the board plus Approve Bylaws Change  
Hat, T-shirt and life-member patch awards

Program: Walking the Jakobsweg in Germany  
A feeder to El Camino de Santiago  
with Kris & Bob Peckman

No reservations; bring a covered dish  
Reminder: Dues were due on January 1st.



The new fad in Europe is for lovers to put a lock on a bridge railing and then throw the key into the river. We found this mess at Dragon's Tooth. Notice how the chain stays tight on the tree and will kill it in two years. The chain was easily removed with a hacksaw.

Bob Peckman

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_ Individual life membership \$250.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Family life membership \$300.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to save a tree and take only an e-Blazer ☐ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **RATC, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, 24024-2282** Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Or go to [ratc.org](http://ratc.org) \*\*\*

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



# CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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.....  
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Webmaster, Jonathan Eagle  
**540-776-1144** ..... [webmaster@ratc.org](mailto:webmaster@ratc.org)

## OTHER

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.....  
Regional Partnership Committee Rep., Mervin Brower  
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Alternate Regional Partnership Committee Rep., John Miller  
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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 Blue Ridge Land Conservancy