

TRAIL BLAZER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROANOKE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

Spring 2018

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

Cornboil Potluck Picnic
Celebrate with the Konnarock Crew
July 21, 6:00 PM, Catawba Center

First Saturday Work Hikes
Bruce Agnew
540-846-6180 - csc236inf@gmail.com

Workhikes

Monday, April 2 - 8:30 AM
Monday, April 16 - 8:30 AM
Monday, April 30 - 8:30 AM
Monday, May 7 - 8:30 AM
Monday, May 21 - 8:30 AM
Monday, June 4 - 8:30 AM
Monday, June 18 - 8:30 AM
Monday, July 9 - 8:30 AM
Monday, July 16 - 8:30 AM
Monday, July 30 - 8:30 AM

Konnarock

June 30 - July 4
July 11 - 15
July 19 - 23

Trail Supervisor - Jim Webb
540-266-8537 – TrailSupervisor@ratc.org

BOARD MEETINGS

Glenvar Public Library
3917 Daugherty Rd, Salem 24153
(All members are always welcome.)

Monday, May 7, 7:00 PM
Monday, June 4, 7:00 PM

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We have folks out there putting their lives on the line to block the MVP

(Past) President's Report

Thank you for letting me serve as your President for the past two years. It has been quite a ride! Our club continues to grow in both membership and influence in the AT community, and we also continue a very long tradition of direct involvement by a high percentage of members.

Every spring the serviceberries, redbuds, and dogwoods herald the Grand Floral Parade in the Southern Appalachians. And so do the maintainers of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club, helping to rebirth over 120 miles of the trail community each year. The hike leaders never stopped, sometimes reveling in cold, ice and snow. College students, section hikers and the McAfee Knob Task Force descend on Dragon's Tooth, McAfee Knob and Tinker Cliffs. It never gets old.

Our club has been around since 1932, founded by the energetic and irascible Myron Avery along with faculty from Roanoke and Hollins colleges. It has been an honor to help keep things going. We are in great shape for the future:

- We have a talented Board of Directors, combining new and experienced leaders with a wide variety of skills. Not every maintaining club can say this! Blanche Brower, Bruce Agnew and I are especially thankful that Terri McClure is taking over as Treasurer, Chris Means is Membership Coordinator and Jim Beeson is our new President. All are highly qualified and know the AT well. Susan Terwilliger will continue as Secretary, while I emulate Roger Holnback and John Miller, serving in the no-heavy-lifting role of Vice President.

Despite snow and wind storms, our section of trail continues to garner praise from hikers. Jim Webb has agreed to shoulder the role of Trail Supervisor for one more year, with Mike Vaughn as his assistant – and over 30 people maintaining individual trail sections. Homer and Therese Witcher continue as the Shelter Supervisors who seem to know every landowner, two-track access point and interesting story about the 120+ miles that we manage. David Youmans is now the Land Management Supervisor.

Susan Herndon-Powell continues as Hikemaster and has introduced popular training for hike leaders while handling many other tasks for the club.

Butch Kelly and Bob Peckman continue in their roles as Conservation Supervisor and Newsletter Editor.

Among Counselors, Brian Boggs also coordinates the extremely active McAfee Knob Task Force that now boasts over 50 trained volunteer ridgerunners. And Anne Kohinke offers sage advice while also managing new membership approvals for our large RATC MeetUp group. Julio Stephens and Josiah Leonard are new Counselors who bring a wealth of experience on the AT to our board.

We have challenges, too. Mountain Valley Pipeline, which RATC has formally opposed since May 2015, has received approvals from federal and state agencies, though it also faces numerous court challenges and the presence of young tree sitters on both sides of Peters Mountain. Volunteers from RATC will be working with ATC and the US Forest Service to monitor the visual impacts of the pipeline, and we will also work with local landowners and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to monitor and report any violations we see to the appropriate federal or state authorities. Please contact me at

vicepresident@ratc.org if you are interested in helping or go directly to the landowner volunteer registration page <https://powhr.org/2018/02/16/volunteer-to-monitor-pipeline-construction/>

I would like to close with the rather remarkable words written by Circuit Court Judge Robert Irons (Monroe County, West Virginia) denying an injunction requested by Mountain Valley Pipeline against the tree sitters just below the AT on Peters Mountain (near Symms Gap Meadow):

"The [tree sitters] generally represent the interest of the public and the environment, such as the interest in protecting the waters underlying Peters Mountain, its flora and fauna, its view shed, the [Appalachian Trail], and similar interests that will or may be destroyed, if this request for a preliminary injunction is granted, and the project proceeds before the public interest is considered at a trial on the merits. These interests may suffer irreparable harm if the preliminary injunction is granted. . .

The only harm MVP will suffer if a preliminary injunction is not granted, is economic harm to MVP, and its partners, which is speculative, at best."

See you on the Trail!

Diana Christopulos

Member News

We are happy to welcome the following new members:

Bryant Altizer

Linda Beury

Catherine Boush

Andrea & Kyle Bratcher

Matthew Burnett

Catherine Cotrupi

Jeffrey & Jeana Cox

Haley Grunwald

Dawn Hakkenberg

Jeff & Family Hill

Allan Jerome

Dan Johnson

JoAnn R. Jones

Debra LeBrun

Thomas Martin

Debbie Meeks

Jeffery & Louise Morris

Barry Morton

Phil & Emily Norman

John W. Pendleton

Jill Pennington

Anne & Family Pfeiffer

Carl & Diana Rosapepe

Beverly Day Schlegel

Christina Urbaniak

Andrew Washburn

Susan Webb

113-Mile Patch:

Chris Venable

Editorial

Meetup has been a wonderful addition to the functioning of RATC. But 43 of our members do not have an email address and many that do are not computer fans. This is not an easy problem. I led a hike to the frozen Cascades recently on very short notice. I didn't know three months ahead when the cold snap would come that would freeze the falls solid. In the past, we would have just called a few friends and gone. Instead I put it on Meetup and we had another nice RATC club hike. If you use the web at all, I can give you a link to the Meetup calendar and you could just check it as easily as it was to get out your Blazer. If some of you need it, we might be able to send out a frequent post-card schedule. Someone suggested the Roanoke Times. Contact me with your thoughts.

If your name has a dollar amount, make the check to RATC and send it to Treasurer, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, VA 24024.

The Blazer still functions as a way to document and present our news. The color pictures in the on-line version are quite nice while some of us like to hold the paper version in our hands at the breakfast table. If you don't use your paper version or if you don't get one but would like to, contact Terri, our new treasurer, and she will mark your preference in the data file. If you told us before and we dropped the ball, tell us again!

The Blazer comes out on the first of January, April, July and October. In order to do that, and maintain my own sanity, I need hike reports, reports from board members, event dates, news, and pictures please during the first weeks of December, March, June and September. I am only the editor, not the author and photographer.

Bob Peckman

Hikemaster Report

Winter seems to be hanging on just a little bit longer, but spring is so very close. As we prepare for the upcoming hiking season, I cannot contain my excitement for seeing all of those beautiful spring wildflowers like bloodroot, spring beauty, and trout lilies. With the spring and summer hiking season soon to be upon us, now is a good time to prepare to lead some hikes for RATC. If you haven't before led a hike, but you do have lots

of experience hiking yourself, we have a training for you! Join us for the RATC New Hike Leader Training on Saturday, April 7. We'll meet at the Daleville Park and Ride and go for a hike while we learn about how to become a RATC Hike Leader. Please go to the RATC Meetup page for more information and to sign-up. Many thanks to all of our current RATC Hike Leaders for all the hikes they have led so far this year.

Susan Herndon-Powell

Hike Reports

Saturday, December 23, 2017 10:00 AM
Hiking 4 trails @ Carvins Cove-Rattli-n Run,
Songbird, Tuck-A-Way and Four Gorge.

Chris Means (leader), Jackelyn Badea, Jennifer Harvey Frye, Ken Myers

We got out today on a 9 miler with the RATC and the ROAG, and I've personally found a new favorite trail in Carvins Cove, Rattlin Run !! Nice moderate length trail with some great rock outcroppings that you can get up close and personal with.. We did get a bit moist on this one, but it was also around 62 F during the hike so, not too bad. A yearling Black Bear and a solar powered, remotely located Christmas Tree were nice added extras as well. Be well peeps, and Get Your Outside On !

Friday, December 29, 2017 8:00 AM
VA 621 (Upper Craig Creek) to VA 630
(Sinking Creek) - RATC Hike #8

Kathryn & Susan Herndon-Powell (leaders), Fred Meyer, Jimbo Harshfield, Ken Myers, Madeleine Taylor, Nancy Reid and Bob Peckman

It was a very chilly morning (about 20 degrees) when we all met at Orange Market to carpool to our scheduled hike of RATC Section #8, VA 621 to VA 630. We first dropped off two shuttle cars to our hike end point near the second tallest oak tree on the entire Appalachian Trail: the Keffer Oak, then drove around to the start of our hike on Upper Craig Creek Road. We quickly warmed up on the gradual four mile ascent up to the Eastern Continental Divide. We chose to have lunch just before we reached the Continental Divide sign because the wind was really whipping up from the other side of the ridge. For most of the rest of the day, we followed the ridge of Sinking Creek Mountain, traversing many sunny ledges with views of the Craig Creek Valley below. We took few breaks due to the chilly wind coming up and over the ridge from the Sinking Creek valley side. We eventually began our descent to the Keffer Oak and Sinking Creek, and the wind finally died down. We enjoyed joining arms around the Keffer Oak before hiking the last 1/2 mile back to the shuttle cars.

What a great group of hardy souls that chose to hike on this beautiful winter day.



Bob, Madeleine, Kathryn, Fred, Ken, Nancy, Jimbo
 - Susan

Monday, January 1, 2018 10:00 AM
New Years Hike @ Stone Mountain State Park
- Roaring Gap, NC

Chris Means (leader), Chasity Graham, Wilma Vargas, Shawn Buck and Jennifer Harvey Frye



Chasity, Wilma, Shawn & Jennifer ----- Means

If the question was how do we start this article feeling New Year, most would not answer with "let's hike"; however, 5 of us did just this :^) And not only did we do this, we drove 2 hours to do it. Enter five hardcore members of two Roanoke based hiking groups, the

RATC and the ROAG, to brave this challenge. After meeting up on Fancy Gap Mtn on the border of NC and VA, and truth be known having a gut check moment as the temp showed a crisp 7°F, we piled in and drove down the mountain to Stone Mountain Park in Traphill, NC. To my amazement we were not alone on the trail systems as we passed at least 10 other hikers, some with faithful canine companions. These pics may grab some of the beauty of what we found out there on New Year's day, but all the glory has to be given to the gear. No bad hikes, just bad gear. Be well peeps, gear up correctly, and Get Your Outside On !!

**Saturday, January 6, 2018 8:00 AM
Cascades while Frozen**

Bob Peckman (leader), Robin Bagby, Jim & Jill Beeson, Maria Bowling, Bill Stegmayer, Katrina Cometa, Carl Cornett, Catherine Cotrupi, Mary & Jimbo Harshfield, Jim Kline, Madeleine Taylor, Wilma Vargas, and Dawn Weideman

Sometimes it is fun to do something crazy. And we were not alone; the crowd was building the whole time we were there. I'm glad we went as early as we did. Pembroke, but it was bloody cold. I lost control of the hike almost immediately. It was just too cold to stand around and be organized.



Taylor



Madeleine Taylor

The frozen pen was reluctant to record names. Some were using the bathroom and some were walking to keep from freezing. Madeleine exposed her hands the

most photographing the stream. I was last out of the bathroom so I was sweep. I had leather-lined boots, two layers of long pants, seven layers on top, a thick

wool cap and boxing-glove mittens where I could keep my fingers in a fist, but some had to really move to keep the blood from crystallizing. When I got to the Falls, Katrina & Jim were walking back to me just as an excuse to keep moving.

The walking was very tricky. There were just a few icy places that we could walk around, but many of the limestone steps were worn very slick and hiking-boot soles were frozen like hard plastic. In most places we could see that there was plenty of water running in the stream but there was one place where people had walked across. If the Cascades had not been there, the walk up the frozen stream would still have made the hike worth it.



Taylor



Wilma

At the falls, the sound of all the shutters was almost deafening. Well, maybe not that bad but we all took a lot of pictures. We know there was water behind the ice only because we had seen it flowing on the way up. The falls are always spectacular, but today brought it to a new dimension. The huge icicles from the surrounding cliffs were also sufficient to justify the walk.

Going back some of us took the high road and some took the low trail; I had stated my intention to take the low trail. But there is a fork close to the falls where I accidentally walked up to the road. I was disappointed to be there because I wanted to photograph the stream on the way back, but realizing that I had seen the cascades frozen over without breaking my hip, decided to just go with it. There was not really a way to communicate with the Harshfields where I was to prevent them from going back to look for me. So Mary & Jimbo got a little extra hiking in which I really appreciate.

After the hike, many of us had ice cream at Tangent before heading home. That is wonderful food for warming up, especially with a cup of coffee.

Saturday, January 13, 2018 9:00 AM
Cove Mountain Loop - Exploring the old A.T.

Jeff Monroe & David Youmans (leaders), Catherine Cotrupi, Dee Chase, Jerry Anderson, Jim Beeson and Wilma Vargas plus NBATC members

A combined RATC/Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club hike crew of ten people and one hiking dog bushwhacked the former route of the Appalachian Trail from the Jennings Creek Bridge to the Glenwood Horse Trail before taking the present AT to the Cove Mountain Shelter – which sheltered the group from the wind during lunch. The hikers then climbed Cove Mountain on the AT to reach the Little Cove Mountain Trail. Everyone took this trail back to the cars, but not before checking out a small waterfall near the end of the hike.

Sunday, January 21, 2018 10:00 AM
Hiking at Apple Orchard Falls/AT/Cornelius
Creek Loop

Chris Means (leader), Chasity Graham, Shawn Buck, David Jermann, Dee Case, George & Matt Self, Ted Lord, Peter Kojtonis, Dawn Weideman, Emily Zhou, Tim Pfeiffer, Justin Bangerter, Brenda Boyle, Jackelyn Badea, Jeanine & Robert Bomber, Ken Myers, Madeleine Taylor, Susan Webb and Wilma Vargas



Means

Initially today's hike was supposed to be a waterfall hike to Apple Orchard Falls, but the Blue Ridge Parkway is still closed due to weather so we shook it up a bit. Twenty-seven people from 3 Meet Up Groups, RATC, ROAG and the ROSC came together at the Peaks of Otter Visitors Center this morning. We broke into two groups from there, one doing Sharp Top and one doing Flat Top. I led the Flat Top group and as usual this trail didn't fail us. I somehow managed to not take any pictures from the overlook at the summit, but got some decent ones along the way. Our 2 hiking groups meet back up at the Visitors Center afterwards and a few of us went on to pick up 2 more miles hiking out to an old settlement home called Johnson Farm.



Means

Again not the hike we'd planned today, but when given lemons people... make that Lemonade !!
 Be well peeps and ... Get Your Outside On !!

Wednesday, January 24, 2018 9:00 AM
Hike to Fullhardt Knob

Nancy Reid and Mary Harshfield (leaders), Beverly Schlegel, Maya Bohler, Susan Terwilliger, Tom Yambrick, Chase Davidson, Terri McClure, Kathy Arrington, Jim Beeson and Madeleine Taylor

We were lucky to have temperatures for our hike in the low 40's, after our severe cold snap in mid-January. We carpooled to the Troutville AT parking lot and began our hike in down jackets, which we shed as we climbed to the pastures on Humbert's Hill. We paused to enjoy the 360° views of the surrounding mountains, and then we crossed the creek and entered the forest. The ascending AT footpath, which winds upward around Fullhardt Knob, is almost rock and root-free. Nice!

Views along the ridge as we climbed to the shelter, and from the shelter itself, were lovely. Hurray for the deciduous forest which lets us see these views- our winter hiking reward!

After lunch at the shelter we returned (now mostly downhill) to the railroad tracks near the parking lot. There we picked up trash and the eleven squashed pennies we had placed on the train tracks on the way up- mementos of another good day in the mountains.

Sunday, January 28, 2018 8:30 AM
RATC Section # 9 - Sinking Creek (VA 630) to
Johns Creek (VA 632)

Cancelled, heavy rain

Wednesday, January 31, 2018 8:00 AM
Goshen Pass - Jump Rock

David Horst (leader), Andrea Bratcher, Anne Pfeiffer, Crystal Guerrant, David Youmans, Doug Knighton, Jeff Monroe, Jim Beeson, Andrew McDonald, Madeleine Taylor, Wilma Vargas, and Jill Pennington

This was a great group of people that did get strung out fairly quickly on the steep ascent leaving the Maury River on the Chambers Ridge Trail. The first 3.5 miles of this hike are a constant ascent except for a few reprieves of false flats. I am never disappointed by the workout this trail gives me. Crystal was a first timer on my hikes and turned out to fit in perfectly. We also welcomed Andrew, who will be through hiking the AT beginning in March, then moving to Montana thereafter. Our loss, for sure, but we wish him the best in his adventures. Jeff came in from Charlottesville mostly to hike this and change the

description in Hiking Upward, as he is now a writer for them. As I didn't have a co-leader in this hike and the trails are often difficult to follow, I brought some fluorescent orange spray paint along. Painting arrows in the snow at every turn helped our eternal sweeper, Madeleine, keep the group going in the right direction. It was an amazing day with some snow on the ground in the higher elevations. The views at Jump Rock and Viewing Rock never disappoint. And no one got lost on this one! I must be improving! However Jill managed to lock her keys in her car. Jeff was kind enough to take her to Lexington so that Randy could pick her up. A few of us ended up at Devils Backbone for a beer and conversation before heading back. Great hike!!

Saturday, February 3, 2018 8:30 AM
James River Face Wilderness Loop

Jeff Monroe & David Youmans (leaders), Andrea Bratcher, David & Mary Beth Horst, Jim Beeson, Val Dymond, Dawn Weideman plus five members of PATC



Together at last!

In what may be a first for the RATC, the James River Face Loop hike was conducted without waiting for the arrival of the scheduled hike leader. The Roanoke group arrived earlier than the Charlottesville-based leader, who picked up 2 hikers in Charlottesville, 2 more in Afton, and a 5th in Staunton on the way to the Petite's Gap Road trailhead. With temps that started the day in the teens, the Daleville group wasn't going to wait long, and they were long gone when the Charlottesville group arrived. There was communication via text between the two groups, and the lead group agreed to wait for the trailing group at the Marble Springs Shelter lunch site, but found that location too windy and cold to stay long. Both groups managed to convene after the hike at the nearby Great Valley Farm Brewery in Natural Bridge. It was great but we missed hiking with you!

Thursday, February 8, 2018
Piney Ridge – Bellamy Creek Loop

David Horst (leader), Jeff Monroe, Josiah Leonard, Jim Webb, Jim Beeson, Nancy Wallace, Julie Petruska and Paul Winter plus Steve

This is a loop that I have been trying to develop as a club hike for some time. My first attempt during a Matts Creek Trail to Piney Ridge loop left me humbled and bloodied. But talking to Jeff Monroe, our James Face expert, we were sure we had a better plan this time. So we gathered an experienced group, which included Jim Webb, in for a rare hike outside of the RATC boundaries. The hike ascended the perfectly maintained Piney Ridge Trail off of Hunt Club Lane...3.5 miles up to the Piney Ridge – AT – Sulphur Ridge Trail intersection. But we would not take any of these! Off to the left is what Jeff and I believe is the old AT alignment...a little overgrown but very hike-able. That is the direction we chose. In about a half mile the trail splits. An old sign post led us to believe that the direction to the right is the old AT which led us to the Marble Springs campsite and the site of the old AT shelter. The trail going off to the left at the sign post follows a parallel ridge to Piney Ridge. But we wanted to follow Bellamy Creek, so we would intersect that trail later in the hike. After arriving at Marble Springs, we stopped briefly to take Nancy's picture in the hollowed out tree. Then attempted to do an out and back up to Highcock Knob. With Steve in the lead we got about halfway up before the trail became unhikeable due to ice. So back down to the campsite we went. And on down our planned route which is what I call the Bellamy Creek trail. The creek was immediately full and rushing....probably spring fed. We followed this for about a mile and a half to the BRP where we hiked along the parkway for another half mile. With our resident bushwhacker, Josiah in the lead, we went off trail up about a quarter mile to an old road bed which would be our trail the rest of the way. Unmaintained, we went over and under blowdowns and sometimes through mountain laurels, pine saplings and a few briars over the next 3 miles. But there were openings along the ridge that were spectacular. Eventually, the trail hits a forestry service maintained area back to the Piney Ridge trail head. Jeff and I talked about getting a group from RATC and PATC and clear the trail in the overgrown areas. Either way, I think with the views and the beauty of Bellamy Creek, this would be a great club hike for the future. Jeff did a nice write up of the hike in his wanderingvirginia.com blog.

Sunday, February 11, 2018 8:30 AM
RATC Section # 9 - Sinking Creek (VA 630) to
Johns Creek (VA 632)

More heavy rain

Tuesday, February 13, 2018 9:00 AM
Bearwallow Rim Loop Hike

Josiah Leonard (leader), David Horst, Greg Edwards, Jerry "Coach" Anderson, Jim Beeson, Julie Petruska, Larry Austin, and Nancy Wallace

My first hike with R.A.T.C. was a similar version of this hike led by Larry Austin, so it felt like coming full circle when I posted this hike and had Larry sign-up as a participant.

Up until the night before the hike, the forecast had called for a cool but sunny day. That changed to cold, dreary, and wet as the "wedge" set-up. Dave even reported some freezing rain as he passed over the Blue Ridge en route to the hike. The carpool met at Daleville (thanks to el Presidente Jim for driving), and we all got underway at 9:30 A.M. Right away, we changed plans and walked down to the Buchanan Trail off of Va. 43 as Larry reported that Bearwallow Creek was growling. One of the big challenges of the day was adjusting clothing as we climbed much of the morning, but also had a cold breeze and drizzle.

Unfortunately, many of our views were blotted out by fog, though we still had views into the immediate valley and hollows below. The fog became especially dense after our lunch at Cove Mountain Shelter, though luckily we had Nancy singing the "Fungi Song" to guide us through the weather. Our group of light-foots made great time across the ridge, through Bearwallow Gap, and then down the horn of the ridge off-trail back to the trailhead. Despite not being a picture-perfect day, it was nevertheless a great hike, and as an added bonus, Julie's trail mix received five-star ratings. Thanks to everyone for coming!

Monday, February 19, 2018 8:30 AM
RATC Section # 9 - Sinking Creek to Johns
Creek (VA 632) - 3rd Time's the Charm!

Kathryn & Susan Herndon-Powell (leaders), Jim Webb, Josiah Leonard, Ken Myers, Madeleine Taylor, Mangala Kumar and Terri McClure

After meeting at Orange Market, it was decided that the group should split in two and do a key exchange on the hike. Susan, Jim, Josiah, and Mangala headed to the Johns Creek trailhead, while Ken, Terri, Kathryn, and Madeleine started at Sinking Creek. It was a foggy morning for much of the hike and we didn't have views at Kelly Knob. However, it was quite a nice hike (with many views) through the rolling meadows and farmland on the Sinking Creek valley side. The groups met on the north side of Kelly Knob and exchanged keys, greatly speeding up our shuttle time for the day.

Sunday, February 25, 2018 10:00 AM
2 Events 1 Day - Trash Dash in Green Hill Park
- then - Hike Poor Mtn. Preserve

Chris Means (leader), Jeanine & Robert & James Bomber, Ken Myers and (doing my best to decipher) David Jermann, Michelle Richer, Justin Bangerter and Paul Houtollis

When you initially think about the RATC hiking club, community service is probably not one of the primary thoughts that springs into the mind, but here we were yesterday in Salem VA doing the deal!! RATC members were joined by members of two other clubs to tidy up Green Hill Park. Nine people spent just a few hours walking the Greenway and Roanoke River creekbank; in that time my best guess is we removed around 50 lbs of trash/debris. We finished the afternoon with a stroll in Poor Mtn. Preserve.

Sunday, February 25, 2018 10:00 AM
Burrus Tract Workhike

Conner McBane (leader) - No report

Saturday, March 3, 2018 8:00 AM
Continue Working on the Sinking Creek AT
ReLo

Bruce Agnew (leader), Brian Kelley, Dominika Dziadowicz, Haley Grunwald, Jim Webb and Tommy Yambrick - No report

Saturday, March 3, 2018 10:00 AM
Hiking in Mill Creek Nature Park - Water Falls -
Lunch at Sentinel Point

Chris Means (leader), Dawn Weideman, Fred Meyer, Jennifer Harvey Frye, Katia Fiorentino, Madeleine Taylor and Mark Farrell plus eleven

RATC, ROAG and the ROSC gathered today comprising a total of 17 people from 3 Meet Up groups for this event in Giles County. We did about 9 miles trekking on 5 different trails in Mill Creek Nature Park, located in the town of Narrows, VA. It was nice to get out after the wind storm we've experienced here in SW VA.. It's amazing what a few waterfalls, fresh air, snacks in a field and some long distance views can do for the soul.;^). An outstanding day with friends, old and new..

Be well peeps.. and.... Get Your Outside On !!!

Monday, March 5, 2018 8:00 AM
Workhike 1/2 Mile South of Rocky Gap

Jim Webb (leader), Brent Scott, Jim Beeson, Mark Farrell and Bill Neilan

Perfect weather for a workhike. Sunny and cool with very little wind. This site was chosen due to the steep rocky trail that has not received a lot of attention since it was built.

With a trail in such bad shape, it was difficult to choose a starting point. We finally chose a very short steep section that is very slippery in rain or snow. Rocks are plentiful in this area so the decision was made as to what kind of steps to put in.

Halfway through the installation, the first two thru-hikers were encountered heading to Niday shelter for the night. They said they had left Springer in mid January.

With Brent doing most of the heavy lifting, we managed to install 12 rock steps in this area making this climb an easy one.

Saturday, March 17, 2018 9:00 AM
Price / Patterson Mountains Middle Cut Loop

Josiah Leonard (leader), Andrea & Kyle Bratcher, Mary Psiaki, Nancy Wallace and Wilma Vargas

Our St. Patrick's Day hike started off on a dreary note as we had some ice and freezing rain while gathering at the Park & Ride. Luckily, everyone signed-up still showed, and Mary offered to drive us all to the trailhead in her roomy mini-van.

Conditions did not improve as we reached the trailhead as we had light showers out of the gap and along the ridge of Price Mountain. Most of us donned rain jackets, but Nancy instead popped out her umbrella and kept trucking over the snow drifts. We had a speedy group, and I was speedily rejected when I suggested that we could add five miles to do the full 17-mile loop versus our 12.7 miles. Despite all of the snow melt, Patterson Creek was still running low, so we were able to rock-hop.

We stopped for lunch after cresting Patterson Mountain. Andrea and Kyle had an impressive spread of meats and cheeses – a travelling delicatessen! It was a rough descent through leaf piles and eroded trail down Patterson Mountain, but the views were impressive back toward Price Mountain. After bottoming out at Little Patterson Creek, the group displayed extreme trust as I navigated us through the choppy hills and hollows back to the base of Sulphur Ridge. I think we were all ready to be done after (or before) we made the final climb back to the gap. Naturally, the weather turned beautiful as we finished the hike. We had a great group and a nice hike!

Monday, March 19, 2018 8:30 AM
Work Hike - Rocky Gap

Jim Webb (leader), Bob Egbert, Jeanine & Robert Bomber, Jim Beeson, Mike Vaughn, Randy & Jill Pennington and Bill Neilan

With the forecast of a 40% chance of rain for the area, we headed down to Rocky Gap again to continue work on this section of trail. With eight people this trip, we were able to split into two teams of four.

As with two weeks before, the work involved removing rocks jutting from the trail, rearranging and leveling larger rocks and filling in low areas. Some of the steeper areas required steps in order to navigate them. With the area littered with rock of all sizes and shapes, finding material for the steps was no problem.

At the end of the day we had completed 10 rock steps with cribbing and smoothed out over 200 feet of trail.

Hiking Guidelines

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

Both hikers and leaders, please go to <https://www.ratc.org/regional-hiking-resources/> and click on Bob Peckman's Regional Hike List to consult the hike descriptions at <http://peckmanjazz.com/HIKERATC.HTM>. Tell me how to make the descriptions better. Try to use the name and description when posting a hike on Meetup, or maybe suggest changes or new hikes.

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. Make requests if we don't fill your needs.

Hikes are rated by length and terrain so hikers can evaluate them based on their individual strengths.
Easy terrain – Greenways or old roads
Moderate terrain – Typical AT
Strenuous terrain – long climbs and rough trails
Challenging – neglected trails and bushwhacking

Shuttle lengths are included to calculate carpool fees of \$0.10/one-way mile including shuttles. Carpool to save gasoline and because trailhead parking may be limited. The hike leader is responsible for arranging the carpool. While there is no fee to hike with the club, the carpool fee is for the driving expenses.

If you are new to hiking or unfamiliar with the hike, contact the leader who will be glad to help you evaluate whether the hike is appropriate for you and also if you are properly equipped. 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. RATC needs you! Get on Meetup and lead a hike or contact the leader on a hike and offer to assist. Come out for the next hike-leader training. Contact Susan Herndon-Powell, hikemaster@ratc.org.

Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club Application New and 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 the instructions of the leader on group hikes and trips.

Name(s) _____	New Member Packet Fee	\$5.00 _____
Address _____	Indiv. # of years _____	x \$15.00 _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____	Family # of years _____	x \$20.00 _____
Home Phone _____ Second Phone _____	Individual Life membership	\$250.00 _____
Email _____	Family life membership	\$300.00 _____
Dues are payable in January of each year. Make checks payable to RATC.		Donation
Please send dues and any questions about money or membership to		\$ _____
Treasurer, PO Box 12282, Roanoke, VA 24024, or email		Amount Enclsd
treasurer@ratc.org (540)387-9732. You can also use PayPal at ratc.org .		\$ _____

TRAIL BLAZER
Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club
8131 Webster Dr
ROANOKE VA 24019-2333



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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PERMIT 509

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Jim Beeson
986-5301 **President@ratc.org**
Vice President, Diana Christopulos
387-0930 **VicePresident@ratc.org**
Secretary, Susan Terwilliger
540-808-6845 **Secretary@ratc.org**
Treasurer, Terri McClure
375-2650 **Treasurer@ratc.org**
Conservation Chair, Butch Kelly
540-384-7429 **butch2410@msn.com**
Land Management Supervisor, David Youmans
302-528-1776 **LandManagement@ratc.org**
Trail Supervisor, Jim Webb
266-8537 **TrailSupervisor@ratc.org**
Shelter Supervisors, Homer & Therese Witcher
266-4849, 266-8912 **ShelterSupervisor@ratc.org**
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537-7433 **Membership@ratc.org**
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302-528-1776 **DavidYoumans1221@gmail.com**
Counselor, Anne Kohinke
312-7070 **Counselor1@ratc.org**

Counselor, Brian Boggs
954-536-5925 **Counselor2@ratc.org**
Counselor, Julio Stephens
540-357-1902 **Counselor3@ratc.org**
Counselor, Josiah Leonard
540-986-5301 **Counselor3@ratc.org**

ANCILLARIES

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Webmaster, Jonathan Eagle
354-3131 **webmaster@ratc.org**
Regional Partnership Committee Alternate, John Miller
375-3250 **john.miller591@comcast.net**
Roanoke College Liaison, Conner McBane
992-1350 **cmcbane@appalachiantrail.org**

OTHER

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540-904-4354 **adowns@appalachiantrail.org**
The Mid-week Crew, Bill Gordge
774-3016 **bgordge@cox.net**
Roanoke Valley Greenways Liaison, Diana Christopulos
387-0930 **dianak16@earthlink.net**
ATC-LT Coord. New River to Damascus, Steve Reisinger
540-951-7580 **srei38@hotmail.com**
Sir Speedy Printer
344-8550 **info@sspeedy.net**

The Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an affiliate of
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
and a member of The Nature Conservancy and the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy